



PHD

Learning English in a Globalized Context: A Case Study of Students in The United Arab Emirates (UAE)

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Award date:
2016

Awarding institution:
University of Bath

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**Learning English in a Globalized Context:
A Case Study of Students in
The United Arab Emirates (UAE)**

Gihane Ibrahim Sadek

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Education

University of Bath

April 2016

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Gihane Sadek

Gihane Ibrahim Sadek

Date: 15 June 2016

قَالَ يَقَوْمِ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِن كُنتُ عَلَىٰ بَيْنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّي وَرَزَقَنِي مِنْهُ رِزْقًا
حَسَنًا وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُخَالِفَكُمْ إِلَىٰ مَا أَنهَيْكُمْ عَنْهُ إِن أُرِيدُ
إِلَّا الْإِصْلَاحَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ
أُنِيبُ



“...I only intend reform as much as I am able. And my success is not but through Allah. Upon him I have relied, and to Him I return”.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere heartfelt gratitude goes out to my supervisor Dr. Trevor Grimshaw for his endless support, encouragement and excellent supervision over the past seven years. It has been a long journey filled with hopes, aspirations, fears and doubts. Dr. Grimshaw helped me to overcome the dreadful times when my home country Egypt was suffering from military and civil unrest and where my children and grandchildren reside. Many times I believed this thesis would never come to an end but Dr. Grimshaw was always there to give much needed encouragement.

I am also very grateful to my husband, Dr. Hesham Fawzi who encouraged and supported me all through the journey and believed in me that I could accomplish this dream.

My eternal thanks go out to my adorable children, Rania, Nermine and Ziad for their unconditional love which kept me going when high waters hit. I am most grateful to my lovely grandchildren, Farida, Ali, Gamila and Dalila. Their hugs, gestures, smiles and laughter have surely brightened my life and made me truly happy.

ABSTRACT

This doctoral thesis examines the relationship between social identity and the learning and use of English as an International Language (EIL). It reports on a study involving Emirati students at a foreign university in the UAE where English is used as the medium of instruction. The study investigates how the students conceptualize the relationship between identity and the English language.

The people of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) like many others in the Arabian Gulf and elsewhere realize the need to learn English. Most of the country's communication in business, economy, science and health is carried out in English. This requirement comes from the fact that the Emiratis constitute only 19% of the UAE population (Mohammed, 2008), while the rest are non-Arabic speakers. The expatriates either have English as their mother tongue or use English as a medium of daily communication.

However, since 2008, there has been a major debate in the media concerning the loss of the Emirati language and identity in the UAE (Al Baik, 2008; Gulf News, 2008; Musabih, 2008; Saayegh, 2008, accessed 14/10/2008; Gulf News, 2008, accessed 23/8/2008). It has been pointed out that nationals not only have to adapt to the new language, but also to the accompanying 'Western culture', including different norms, values and ideals that may conflict with the learners' own Arab Muslim beliefs and ideologies.

Previous studies have explored a long-standing debate which centers on the issue of whether we can teach a language successfully without teaching its accompanying culture (Kramsch, 1993, 1998; Byram, 2002, 2010; Beykont, 2002; Brown, 2000; Risager, 2011, 2012; Hinkel, 1999; Dervin and Risager, 2014). It has been argued that in a globalized context, English has become the gatekeeper to higher education, a high-income job, and information (e.g. through the Internet) (Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook, 1994; Holliday, 2005; Canagarajah, 1999; Phan, 2008; Sharifian, 2010; Rapatahana and Bunce et al, 2012). Moreover, English in many contexts is regarded as a status symbol of the elite (Holborow, 2000).

ABSTRACT

The present study adds to this debate by investigating the place of English in the UAE, where the non-Arabic speaking expatriates outnumber the locals. It discusses this situation in general and particularly investigates the attitudes of eight Emiratis towards EIL. The study was interpretive and qualitative. The data were gathered by means of interviews with eight student participants and analysed thematically.

The study reveals that there is considerable disconnection between the language policy intentions and the implementation of Arabic and English teaching and learning in schools and higher education. Moreover, the findings suggest a detachment between the ideologies practices of Emirati people and the policy of the government of the UAE. They also reveal that although participants are discontented with the Arabic status within their country, they still use English extensively in their daily communication. In addition, Emiratis often negatively assign low status to the Arabic language.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

UAE	United Arab Emirates
SIT	Social Identity Theory
ADEC	Abu Dhabi Education Council
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
EIL	English as an International Language
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
TESOL	Teaching English to Students of Other Languages
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
CAL	Critical Applied Linguistics
EMI	English Medium of Instruction
ICLHE	Integrated Content and Language in Higher Education
CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning
LL	Linguistic Landscape
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 The substantive topic

In today's world English language functions as a global medium of communication in numerous spheres of activity, including science, health, business, economy, entertainment, education, media, etc. Specifically in education, the English language is not only seen as an additional skill, but as a necessity without which people are deprived of knowledge and power. This applies to both schools and universities. In many countries around the world English is the medium of teaching in higher education, and science and mathematics are delivered in English in schools.

Such is the case in the UAE. The UAE has a unique demographic imbalance where a mix of cultures from more than 200 nationalities coexists. Only one out of seven people is an Emirati national. Government officials and commentators have voiced concern about this influx of foreigners whose cultures some view as posing a threat to local traditions and identities (Galal, Agence France-Presse, 2009, accessed on 10/12/2009). Emirati students, in schools and universities learn EIL because they see the need for it in a time of globalization. However, teaching English also involves teaching the target language culture, which may pose a threat to the perceived national cultural identity in the Emirati context. The current research investigated how Emirati students negotiate their social identities and manage their local cultural identities when it comes in contact with the language culture and in what way it is affecting their social identities. Putting it simply, this study has explored how the Emiratis conceptualize the relationship between the social identities and the English language.

One major aspect of the debate centers on whether we can separate the language from its culture and still successfully teach that language. In Arabic speaking countries there is a great demand to teach English to learners of EIL while at the same time safeguarding the Arabic language. The Emirati government thus announced in March 2008 that the Arabic language is the official language in all federal authorities and establishments. This move has been greatly appreciated by prominent UAE intellectuals such as

Dr.Ebtisam Al Kitbi, Professor of Political Science at the UAE University in Al Ain, who in 2008 said:

"To my knowledge, there is no nation that allows an invasion of foreign languages in government institutions the way we did in the UAE. The move will correct the imbalance; see countries like Germany, France and Japan. People there use foreign languages, but you will never see them in the work place other than their national languages. English is widely used in the government in the UAE and this is unacceptable".

She added that the move was long overdue and that it was a step in the right direction to emphasize national identity. She also emphasized that the decision follows the UAE constitution which states that the language of the land is Arabic without exception (Al Baik, 2008). According to Dr. Al Kitbi, nationals will not only have to adapt to the new language, but to the accompanying 'Western culture' with its different norms, values and ideals that may conflict with the learners' own local beliefs. Non-Emiratis have changed the life-style, language and social assumptions of the local population. This in turn has affected morals and attitudes, and has threatened to turn the Emiratis into becoming an invisible minority in their own homeland (Galal, AFP, 2009).

The UAE is a rapidly developing nation which has one of the most diverse population structures in the Middle East and Asia. According to the United Arab Emirates Demographics' 2008, only 19% of its inhabitants are Emirati nationals, while 23% are Arabs and Iranians, nearly 50% are South Asians and finally 8% constitute other expatriates (Musabih, 2008). The Foreign Minister, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al-Nahyan said at the National Identity conference in 2008:

'We have a mix of cultures with around 200 nationalities in the UAE, and we coexist in peace ... however, this mix should not affect the national identity' (Galal, AFP, 2009).

Intellectuals and prominent figures in the UAE often voice concern as to what the proper mechanisms to activate national and culture identity are. Dr. Ameenah Al Daheri, Associate Professor at the UAE University, explains, 'Nationals are concerned about

their identity because they are a minority in their homeland' (Gulf News, 2008). These Emirati minority nationals may be exposed to several ideologies that could lead them to take on foreign values. These values might conflict with their own perceived national identity and local culture. As concerns continued to escalate in the nation, on the UAE 36th National Day anniversary, the government declared 2008 as the Year of National Identity. The first UAE National Identity Conference was held in early 2008 and officiated by His Highness Sheikh Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Minister of Presidential Affairs who made the following remarks:

‘Our adherence to the national and indigenous traditions which are rooted in Islamic and Arab values and traditions does not in any way mean that the UAE is parting with the values and constructive interactions of the modern world. We seek to further consolidate the reconciliatory integration between our national identity on the one hand and our connection and belonging to our Arab and international character’ (Emirates News Agency, WAM, 2008).

In the past eight years, the UAE government continued to make efforts to safeguard the national identity of its people. Decreasing birth rates, rising divorces and the growing number of expatriates were reported as some of the problems, which urged the state to encourage Emirati couples to get married to preserve their construct of national identity (Galal, AFP, 2009). One of the incentives that may preserve the country’s cultural heritage had included state sponsorships for Emirati couples to receive financial assistance from the UAE Marriage Fund. Galal (ibid.) states that, despite some of these initiatives, there is still much to be done to maintain the national identity. With government efforts in areas such as national identity awareness campaigns, immigration laws, community awareness and particularly, in the area of education, it is the intention of this research that some of these issues be further investigated.

It has been argued that to learn to communicate well in a foreign language, such as English, one must get to know some elements of the culture of the people who speak that language (Kramsch, 1988). Brown (2000:82) also argues that language and culture cannot be separated, because they are two parts of a whole. Pennycook (1994) is one of a number of influential theorists of EIL who argues that English poses a threat to other

languages because it has become the pre-eminent language of knowledge, the media, and so much more. Pennycook (ibid.) states that: ‘When English becomes the first choice as a second language ...it is constantly pushing other languages out of the way, curtailing their usage both in qualitative and quantitative terms’ (p. 14). In the current global world context, the English language has gained importance, and has become the lingua franca of today (Crystal, 2003; Pennycook, 1994, 1998; Phillipson, 1992). It is currently viewed as the language of politics, science, diplomacy, technology and the Internet to name but a few. Without English proficiency, non-English speakers of the language may find it difficult to compete in the international market. This may in turn necessitate new and different approaches to teaching EIL which brings in elements of local culture that would integrate with the global status of English. In other words, TESOL teachers should not be teaching English using the same methodologies and materials used prior to the globalization wave, but rather teach English as a universal language. This entails teaching a ‘global culture’ that would realize that TESOL educators currently need to design new curriculums, pedagogies and teaching materials.

1.2 Background to the study

My interest in this topic stems from my own professional activities in the UAE, where I have now been living and working for the past 14 years. After receiving my Master’s degree in TESOL from the American University of Sharjah (one of the Emirates of the UAE), I worked for five years in a private American university as an English Instructor teaching English to mainly Emirati students. During my teaching career, I came to realize the vast culture difference between the Emirati culture and the ‘Western’ culture associated with English teaching. Most of my TESOL teaching materials came from either the USA or the UK or other native-English speaking countries. These materials for example contained some family relationships in the foreign culture which were viewed as offensive to the Arab Emirati Islamic culture. Such examples may be, but not limited to, dating or non-marital relations which are sometimes part of the social norms in the West while they are strange and unacceptable within the Emirati culture. These students may have had to deal with some of these tensions, negotiations and or contradictions to handle the conflict that may have arisen between the two cultures. I

personally felt these tensions during my teaching years in the UAE, and as a reflective teacher, I noticed that such anxieties sometimes acted as barriers to their learning and may have constructed an inhibiting element into their educational experience.

In the field of education, several writers have commented that learners of English appear to be assimilating the value systems of the 'West' (Adaskou, Briten and Fahsi, 1989; Asraf, 1996; Ndebele, 1987). For example, Asraf (1996) questions if English learners should be fully immersed in the target culture in order to communicate well in the new language. Asraf (ibid.) proposes that teachers of English should use teaching materials and resources that are derived from a mixture of other cultures (both 'Eastern' and 'Western'). She emphasizes that approaches to language teaching should be adapted to the social and cultural contexts of the learners in order to enhance their learning. Based on my personal experience in teaching English to Emiratis in the UAE, I agree with the latter statement as I noticed students are more motivated to learn the language, English in this case, when I provided them with topics associated with their daily lives, local culture and heritage.

1.3 Aims of the study and Research Question

The purpose of this doctoral study was to find out, explain, understand and analyze the challenges faced by Emiratis when learning English and to address the question of how they conceptualize the relationship between their social identities, which are socially constructed and the English language. The purpose of this research was to provide an understanding of the role of English in the UAE and the implications it has on the second language identities within an international context. Through this study, I try to increase knowledge in the field of language teaching. The rationale for this study was to explore and explain how the Emirati EIL students engage with English as an international language and the accompanying Anglophone 'Western' culture. In addition to this the question of how they manage and negotiate their perceived social identities, culture and language while in the process of learning and using English was also investigated. Currently, the UAE Government perceives a problem from the intrusion of the English language and I will find out whether there is a problem or not only by doing this research. Moreover, this study is not only aimed at increasing knowledge in the field

of English language education in the UAE but also building better understanding of the English language education in a broader international community in general.

English is currently used as the language of communication in the everyday lives of the UAE citizens. This study is also aimed at addressing some of the claims that the Arabic language may be at risk from the intrusion of other foreign languages and cultures, especially English and its associated culture. This research may benefit the UAE government and society by showing what is really happening in the field of second language education in that country. In this study, I sought to address the following research question:

RQ1 How do Emirati students conceptualize the relationship between social identity and the English language?

I sought to find out how Emiratis perceive their social identity despite the intrusion of English and 'Western' culture. I paid special attention to their changed world view after learning and using English.

1.4 Significance of the study

This research investigates a topical issue of profound interest and impact in many parts of the world where English is taught and learnt. Specifically, this research focuses on English and social identity in the UAE but may resonate not only in the Arabian Gulf but in other regions of similar global contexts. Without doubt, the Emirati social identity is affected by both English and Arabic, as the Arabic language constitutes an integral part of students' linguistic Arab identity. Thus, the relationship of English with Arabic is also of paramount importance and was investigated in this study. This research has also explored whether the poor proficiency of the Arabic language among Emirati EIL students is primarily due to the English language or to other factors that might explain the weakness of the mother-tongue.

This study makes a theoretical contribution to our overall understanding of the role of English in the world with an emphasis on social identity. It is significant in that it addresses the claim in the UAE that English is overriding Arabic and that it is the reason

for Arabic being set aside. It also showed the discrepancy between the state language policy and the actual linguistic situation on the ground. It is hoped that this study will highlight the need for decision makers to revisit the language policy and provide a more balanced bilingual model in the nation. Moreover, this study provides the rationale for the advocacy of using Arabic among Emiratis in their daily communication with friends, work colleagues and in texting while using mobiles and other similar communication channels. Although I am not seeking representativeness, I hope that this study will resonate with other researchers in the field of language teaching and learning. I believe this study is timely and of value to a wide community of educators.

1.5 Preview of the Structure and Content of the Thesis

In this introductory chapter I have given a general outline about the UAE with special emphasis on its unique demographic imbalance of its nationals versus expatriates. I have also laid the foundation for the background of the study and explained some challenges facing the Emirati perceived identity while learning English as an International language. Finally, in this chapter I have elucidated the significance of my study and specified the major research question.

Chapter 2 presents a review of the main research literature in the key areas of EIL, English language learning and second language identities. This is followed by my theoretical framework, which is informed by the Social Identity Theory (SIT). My final section is concerned with English as a medium of instruction in education in the UAE.

Chapter 3 presents the rationale for my methodological approach, the methods I used, instruments for data collection and analysis, justifications for the chosen research approach, description of the research settings, and ethical considerations. In this chapter, I also explain why I chose to conduct an interview based study, giving specific details of the number of interviews, my eight Emirati student participants, the two Arabic curriculum designers who are also Arabic teachers and how the interviews were conducted. This chapter also presents the overall theoretical framework for this study and elaborates on its main theoretical strand.

Chapter 4 provides my data analysis of interviews. This chapter has been divided thematically to present the three main topics that emerged: Language use in the UAE; Language domain and social identity in the UAE and Language hierarchy and social identity in the UAE. Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the main findings and Chapter 6 gives the implications and conclusions of this research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction to Chapter 2

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this study aimed to examine how Emirati students of English conceptualize the relationship between English as an International Language and identity. In this research, the role of English in the UAE with specific focus on identity is placed in the foreground of the analysis. It was therefore imperative to examine the existing body of research literature in a number of related fields. The literature review is divided into four main sections covering topics and issues of interest and relevance to this study.

I shall begin this chapter by critically reviewing the literature of English as an International language in general, and specifically in the UAE. This includes the relationship between English and Arabic. I shall then go on to offer a critique of the literature concerned with second language learning and second language identities. The latter section will also discuss stereotyping and its relation to the social identity theory. Following that, I will critically review research literature that is concerned with the theoretical framework of this study and with how the Social Identity Theory informed this research. The latter section also covers the relationship between language learning and culture. Finally, in my last section I shall discuss English as a medium of instruction in education and critically review relevant literature in this domain. This last section and the areas it covers are a key element to this study.

2.2 English as an International Language (EIL)

Central to this study is a focus on how the Emirati students perceive the relationship between social identity and the English language. The effect of globalization on the Emirati student has been to raise questions about how intercultural education and language can impact on their identities, and on their Arabic language. People involved in the areas of intercultural education and language education must now consider in greater depth significant topics such as culture and identity (Dunworth & Shang, 2014). Moreover, EIL is continuously being labelled by its agents as the tool for economic and

material wealth (Rapatahuna & Bunce, 2012), yet for a country like the UAE, EIL may have significant repercussions on the Emirati social and linguistic identities.

Prior to globalization, and only a couple of centuries ago, the English language was spoken by mainly monolinguals sharing a small island (Graddol, Leith and Swann, 1996, p.3). However, we currently cannot deny significant effects of globalization on multidimensional features of peoples' lives, including the language policies of many nations (Kirkgoz, 2009). Among these changes exists that fact that English has now become the lingua franca in many parts of the world. For this reason, EIL has become a necessity due to globalization, and is now used for communication as much among 'non-native speakers' as 'native speakers' (Brown, 2001). Therefore, this change must be considered and reflected in the teaching of English as EIL: its terminology, its methodology, its teaching materials, teachers' perspectives towards the learners and their ever changing identities.

EIL is now being applied in many countries and is being used by multilingual speakers (Alsagoff, 2012). As Alsagoff rightly states, most of the material used to teach English is basically made either in the UK or the US and targets English-speaking countries. These materials tend to carry a heavy Western cultural load in terms of their content. The fact that these materials are derived from Western countries is likely to have an impact on the social identity of the Emirati students. In particular, many Emirati students resent the Western culture associated with learning English and specifically English as a medium of instruction in schools and higher education because they believe it infringes on their social identity and the Arabic language.

In the context of this research, many of the Western values are being transformed to EIL Emirati students which contents are against the values and norms of Emirati Arab cultural identities. Currently, English engages in the transformation of culture, identity and language. In addition, hybridization of English is now taking place with the local languages and users of English take ownership of (Bhabha, 1994). Phillipson (2009) rightly suggests that the diverse English users with their varied learning contexts have different language needs and argues further by stating that the teaching of English should reflect the changing nature of English users.

Jenkins (2000) convincingly argues moreover, that the present English being taught should consider the context in which communication is happening between ‘non-native speakers’ to one another. Again and due to globalization, English has crossed its original borders and is now the lingua franca of many as there are more speakers who use English than native speakers (Canagarajah, 2005; Jenkins, 2000; Siedlhofer, 2011). Canagarajah also warns that it is due time to carefully revisit the language learning fields in order to give a completely new perspective to identity, language and knowledge. He states that plural discourses should be developed which rely mainly on the ‘local ground ... in the construction of contextual relevant knowledge’ (ibid., p. xiv). Moreover, English is considered as the bridge between cultures and nations (Alsagoff, 2012).

As mentioned above, part of this study aims to understand how Emirati students view the English language and its impact on their different identities. Some English learners look at their language learning as a gate to economic prosperity, opportunity and mobility, while others may regard it as a sign of domination and cultural pre-eminence (Hewings & Tagg, 2012). Canagarajah (1999) states that periphery ELT students acknowledge the need for English language and literacy for survival in a global world and for social and economic status even though their predicament is not in the learning itself but rather in how they are being taught. Canagarajah’s (ibid.) approach to ELT students may be significant to this research because Emiratis may need a different teaching method to be able to cater for their learning needs while at the same time maintaining their perceived cultural and linguistic identity.

More recently, Canagarajah (2013) draws attention to some of the terminologies used interchangeably for EIL and EFL in ELT. He asserts that the impact of one language on the other may be enabling, and could offer possibilities for voice (ibid.). Voice here would entail giving preferences to local teachers’, parents’ and learners’ needs in various socio-cultural communities around the world. In addition, I conform to this view as it gives the learners ample opportunities to have their voice when learning English and to have a say if and when they feel a threat to their national, linguistic and cultural identities.

Another pertinent point to this discussion is Canagarajah's (2013) statement regarding the teaching of English and Western teachers where he explains that teachers from the dominant English-speaking nations went abroad to teach English and undertake curriculum change. However, this resulted in their representation of Western concepts. A related point to this discussion and if in future EIL is made more global, is the question of which standard of English should be taught and whose culture should be adhered to (Matsuda, 2005). In a more recent writing, Matsuda (2012) rightly asks whose culture teachers should present to the students as the 'English-speaking culture' while teaching English (p.4). Matsuda (ibid.) calls for a change in the current pedagogy that introduces the learner only to the English varieties, people and culture of the inner circle countries because English learners no longer learn the language to solely communicate with native speakers.

In summary, this section has indicated that due to globalization and the fact that English has become the lingua franca, EIL should be revisited by TESOL educators for a different pedagogy of teaching. This review also showed that language learning entails culture learning, and that the students' local culture and language must be taken into consideration when teaching/learning EIL. I found scholars' theories represented in this section helpful in shedding light on the main interest in this research. Within the UAE context, EIL teachers should change their current pedagogies and the materials used in teaching in order to cater for the Emirati's different identities. The next section will discuss second language learning and second language identities.

2.3 Second Language Learning and Second Language Identities

Research in the field of language learning and the social context in the 1970s and 1980s was not concerned with identity as such, but mainly focused on the language variations and what it defined. Although sociolinguists did acknowledge the significance of these variations and what information about the speaker's social identity they may have signalled, the concept then was not fully analysed (Dyer, 2007). In addition, identities are social and multifaceted constructs, which entails that they are always changing, that they are understood and exhibited through dress codes, actions, behaviours and language. Individuals possess several identities because they occupy multiple roles and

are members of several groups and also claim many characteristics (Burke & Stets, 2009). Social identities are also concerned with shared beliefs, values and practices between individuals. Moreover, identities are linked to demographic categories such as ethnicity, race, nationality, migration, gender, social class and language (Block, 2007a, Bonavita, 2011).

To better understand the relationship between identity and language learning, Block (2007a) suggests that we should analyse naturally occurring interactions. In particular, issues of identity and race are of importance to this research and the field of TESOL in general because they form social, cultural and political aspects of language teaching/learning. We cannot overlook the fact that teaching English does involve some sort of power relations which are a result of dissimilarities between teacher and student and thus lead to racialization (Kubota & Lin, 2006). I concur with the authors that it is time that the TESOL field not turn a blind eye towards racialized diversity and that we must comprehend and address this sensitive issue because in the current global world, we are facing a huge diversity of people and cultures. Kubota & Lin (*ibid.*) highlight the importance of why TESOL practitioners must realize how their ideas of race affect their teaching methodologies, what they teach and the nature of their students, i.e. their identities.

Block (2007a) states several different types of identities that are co-constructed collectively and individually by the language learner: migrant identity, ethnicity and race, social class, gender, national identity and language identity. Due to its relevance to this research, I will focus on what Block terms ‘language identity’. From this term, one can see that language identity is concerned with the connection between the individual self and the language he uses or learns. I view language identity as a form of social identity that is generally about language expertise, language affiliation and language inheritance. Expertise is related to how proficiently an individual knows the language; affiliation describes a person’s attitude towards the language, i.e. how much an individual identifies with and feels towards the language; and finally inheritance is concerned with an individual’s birth place, which is where the language is being practiced.

However, the above does not give any assurance of affiliation or proficiency in that language because linguistic identities are dynamic and continuously evolving, and people may change them through the years (Shohamy, 2006). To be born in a certain language community does not guarantee that you will excel in that language or that you will not have affiliation and proficiency in another language, and this may explain or justify to a certain extent why my eight Emirati participants find it easier to talk English than Arabic because the main reason is/may be that although they were born in the UAE, which is an Arab country, and hold the Emirati citizenship, their schooling, higher education, media, and the rest are in English rather than in Arabic.

Understanding identities as covered by the literature is crucial to this research. The work on identities takes a post-structural concept of social identities as being multi-faceted, changeable and a place of struggle, and this necessitates that the individual in SLA theory be re-conceptualized (Peirce, 1995). Norton (2000) suggests that this struggle is due to the individuals' essential needs for safety and recognition which usually produces several and opposing desires. According to Peirce (*ibid.*), SLA theorists have found it difficult to understand the relationship between the language learner and the social world, due to the lack of comprehending the social identities that place significance on the language learner and the language learning context.

The relation between the language learner and the language learning context is important to understand due to its impact on the social identity of the learner. Individuals' identity cannot be separated from the symbolic and materialistic belongings they have in a given society. Relatedly, Byram (2002) clarifies that language is also a symbol of social identity and constructs social identity, and Pennycook (1998) states that language is a symbol of cultural reality. Moreover, as Grimshaw (2010, p. 245) confirms, language is significant in the construct of identity and 'impression management' as it acts as a support of identity and a tool for empowerment. Pertinent to this research, I found that although learning English by my participants did empower them as Emiratis to construct their multiple social identities, it may have been at the expense of impeding their Arabic language and thus their Arabic Emirati identity, to a certain extent.

As language is a representation of social identity, language learners' motivation to access the language is not the only factor which may advance or hinder their learning. Unequal power relations between language learners and the target language speakers are a significant additional factor that may hinder or enhance language learning (Chowdhury and Phan Le Ha, 2014). Another valid argument in this context is that socially speaking, language together with its culture plays a role in the organization and unity of its members in order to form their national identity (Phan Le Ha, 2008, p.28). Pertinent to this study, participants stated of low proficiency of their Arabic language which, based on the latter argument, may result that they may not have a solid grasp of their social identity. This consequence in turn necessitates a warning flag to enhance the Arabic language for Emiratis because of its close relationship to their linguistic identities.

In my research context the relationship between English and Arabic is a key one, i.e. whether learning and using English in educational settings and in almost daily activities sets aside Arabic in the UAE. Discussing language choice in education means also simultaneously discussing national identity too (Graddol, 2006, p. 116). Conforming with the latter stance, and directly related to this study, one might suggest that using English as a medium of instruction in higher education in the UAE poses a threat to both the Arabic language and the Arab students' identity (Naidoo, 2011). Echoing this view Tamtam et al. (2012, p. 1419) warn us that English as a medium in higher education can have a 'detrimental effect' on the mother tongue of nations who implement this language policy.

In order to fully comprehend the association between language learners and the target language, Norton (2000) argues for a concept of 'investment', to complement the construct of motivation. The construct of investment is a sociological one and aims to provide meaningful connections between the learners' wish and willingness to learn a language and their changing identities. Individuals' investment may not often be equivalent to their motivation but always intersects with the language learners' multiple and complex identities which always change across time and space and are carved in relations of power (ibid.). Because when the second language learners speak, they do not

only communicate information but also, at the same time, always restructure who they are and what their relation to the social world is. When the learners invest time, effort and money in learning a language, they do so in order to gain or ‘invest’ in an identity of speakers of that language. Pertinent to the notion of investment is Norton’s (2000) work on identity and language learning and how ‘investment’ is linked to the construction of identity and negotiation.

In addition to investment, Norton (1997) also draws on another notion that has significant relation to identity and language learning, i.e. desire. Motha & Lin (2013) explain that desire is closely linked to identity because the two notions aim to achieve recognition, affiliation and security. These desires cannot be separated from the allocations of material resources in a given society. Motha & Lin (2013) assert that desire attaches identity to English because it secures access to social and material resources. Moreover, desire cannot be present out of a social context as it is constructed within an intricate web of relationships between individuals, institutions and states. It is in this context that we witness the desire to learn English, to seek the identity of English speakers or even their appearance (*ibid.*, p. 334). Therefore, language learners are influenced by ‘motivation’ ‘investment’ and ‘desire’. All three have an impact on the learners’ identity and how it enhances or impedes their language learning. Relevant to this research, however, Emirati students learn English in order to compete in the global market and not to be left out. They do not learn English because they desire to seek the identity of an English native speaker (Findlow, 2005).

Research on identities in SLA is on the rise and I find it imperative to complement this discussion by drawing on the influential work of Block (2007b). Reviewing the body of work earlier undertaken in this field, Block comes to the conclusion that the relation between identity and SLA is quite problematic. In his article, ‘The Rise of Identity in SLA research, Post Firth & Wagner, 1997’, Block (*ibid.*) explains that although Firth and Wagner did not openly discuss identity in SLA research, they paved the way for SLA to be linked to sociolinguistic and sociological studies, thus guiding researchers to investigate identity and SLA. This transition therefore, suggests that there was a paradigm shift from mentalistic and cognitive orientations to more contextual and social

orientation in SLA research (Block, 2007b). Firth and Wagner (1997, p. 285) call for better ‘contextual and interactional dimensions of language learners’ identities’ and criticized research in SLA by stressing the need to widen our comprehension of the language learners as socially situated beings. However, and based on the post-structural approach to identity, instruments to research the crossroads between identity positioning and language learning are complicated (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004).

Due to globalization, some views regard the spreading of the English language as a necessity while others regard it as a form of linguistic imperialism (Baker, 2006). Unlike some other languages, English has significant influence and it is here to stay, and may provide strength to some and weakness to others. Baker (2006) clearly states that when English is learned as a second language, it is not merely a language but has local and global dimensions: As it intermingles with ‘cultural heritage, technology and travel, identity and belonging to imagined communities’ (ibid., p. 83).

Imagined communities (Anderson, 1983) and imagined identities are made up by language learners when they learn a language - in this case English - that is not in concurrence with the language learners’ realities. However, these imagined communities significantly affect the learners’ ‘investment’ in the target language and course of study (Kannon & Norton Pierce, 2003). Simply put, when a language learner begins learning a new language, they ‘imagine’ a new community and/or a new identity which they will claim after learning the language. The learners are focused on the future and what new communities they may join once they learn the language.

The relationship between ‘imagined communities’ and ‘imagined identities’ was of great interest to Norton (2000). Norton argues that not knowing the learners’ imagined communities and imagined identities may often hold back a teacher’s ability to build a positive learning environment in which the language learners can invest. She also researched several case studies to investigate; how a language learner learns, under which contexts the language is spoken and how language teachers address the sensitive and varied experiences of the language learner. These perspectives are also of significance to this research in order to comprehend how my eight participants conceptualize the relationship between their social identity and the English language.

Norton (2013) also rightly explains how an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher may emphasize students' past while the learners are motivated to learn in English, about their 'imagined community' after learning the language which may enhance their job opportunities (ibid., p.9). Putting it simply, the ESL teacher may tend to ask the language learners about their past: where they come from, talk about their brief history, their past experiences, and so on. At the same time, however, language learners need to learn, in English, about their future, to be able to communicate about job opportunities, how to enhance their proficiency level. This imagined community assumes an imagined identity and the learner investment in the target language should be comprehended within this context.

Relevant to this discussion is the fact that learning a language to obtain 'communicative competence' could have different meanings according to the identity of the students and their purpose for learning (Wolfson, 1989, p. 29). Wolfson adds that TESOL teachers should bear the responsibility in assisting the learners to construe values and patterns which they may not find easy to comprehend. However, she rightly warns against changing students' values and identities, as it is not the teacher's role to mould the student into new behavioural norms that are identical to those of the people of the target language. Lin (2013) also concurs with the latter and states that the challenge is how to make students connected with 'social practices' that would provide the learners with various semiotic (meaning-making) resources so that they attain meaningful identities and purpose.

Within the context of the UAE, the above notions are valid as the Emirati students learning EIL need to maintain their values as Muslim Emirati Arabs and not to be moulded typically into the new behavioural norms of the 'West' (Al Baik, 2008; Gulf News, 2008; Musabih, 2008; Saayegh, 2008, accessed 14/10/2008; Gulf News, 2008, accessed 23/8/2008). Bearing in mind that most often the English teaching materials are made in the US and the UK and the teachers are native English speakers, these 'Western' materials and teaching staff are rather distant from the students' local environment and culture and may be construed not only as alien but go against the students' culture and religion thus not creating a positive learning environment (ibid.).

Several factors come into play for creating purpose and a good learning environment, among which are the understanding of the diversity of race and ethnicity which have been a focus of research in several disciplines but rather neglected by the field of TESOL. Kubota & Lin (2006) state that research into race and ethnicity will provide insights into language learning. They further say that such research may generate issues of great interest on how race and ethnicity have an impact on 'identity formation, instructional practices, program development, policy making, research and beyond' (ibid., p. 473). Pertinent to this discussion is the question of how language constructs meaning by being a representational system in its own right (Hall, 1997, p.1). Through language, individuals express their feelings, ideas, and concepts and therefore language can be said to be one of the media through which individuals are represented in culture. Thus, without language meaning cannot be produced.

Investigating identity and language issues is significant in the field of language teaching/learning. Like any ethno-linguistic group, the identity of Arab learners of EIL is closely linked to the Arabic language. This research investigates how Emirati students, who are Arabs, conceptualize the relationship between social identity and the English language. In the context of this research, having an Arabic identity entails speaking Arabic. The Arabic identity may generally mean and is regarded as relying basically on the Arabic language (Findlow, 2005). Therefore, Emiratis who are bilingual, feel they belong to the linguistic and cultural communities, of both their national and the target language. Subsequently, in a global context, and hypothetically, we may have two contradicting poles; a need to belong via English to the global world of technology, finance, economy and the like, and a need to be distinct as Arab Emiratis, as holding onto an Arab Emirati identity.

The literature reviewed provides definitions of the Social Identity Theory (SIT), and authors have agreed on a general meaning. SIT was first developed in the late 1970s by Tajfel and has much matured conceptually through the years (Hogg, 2006). SIT may be defined as the different ways by which individuals understand themselves in relation to others, and the ways in which they see their past and future possibilities (Norton Peirce, 1995). How this relationship is also understood between individuals and the world and

how it is constructed through ‘time and space’ (Norton, 1997, p.410) are also relevant questions. Putting it simply, every person creates and has his own unique personal identity as an individual, and forms his/her social identity based on the groups to which they belong (Tajfel, 1982). Thus, current identity theories provide means to view the language learner in a larger social context.

However, traditionally, SLA researchers put more emphasis on the process of learning than on the ‘flesh-and-blood’ of the language learner (Kramsch, 2009, p. 2). Kramsch rightly states that in the past, researchers used to investigate the language learner’s mind, separately from his body and social behaviour, as if dividing the three into different domains and researching them separately. Language was also looked upon as a tool for only social interaction and inter-personal communication. This past view failed to see the very close link between identity and language, and that once we learn a language we do not only use it to communicate an idea or thought but, more importantly, to deliver an identity, of who we are, to the listener (ibid.)

These group memberships, together with the individuals’ beliefs and principles, are important in the formation of their social identities as they set out the kinds of ‘communicative activities and the particular linguistic resources for releasing them’ (Hall, 2012, p. 31). However, people’s social identities are not only formed by their own but also by embedded past histories made up through the years by other group members who hold similar positions. Then, through these histories, the identities are linked with certain linguistic actions and attitudes (ibid.). Therefore, this means that social identity groups are formed by society, and individuals, being social agents, must and should abide with what society dictates because ‘individuals exist within the context of the social structure’ (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 3).

Our linguistic actions and attitudes are also affected by the context in which we speak. Hall (1997) draws on an interesting point regarding different social identities and the question of how they change and vary according to the context. He rightly explains that we assume different social identities and therefore seek different kinds of communicative activities and certain linguistic resources based on the context in which we are in and the identities of the other participants. To clarify the latter, a good

example is given when we travel abroad; we usually emphasize our nationality when we meet other nationalities. However, if as parents we attend a school parents' meeting, we enact different roles, such as parents, teachers, etc.

That is to say, in addition to the group membership we acquire by birth, we also appropriate another layer of group membership based on the social institutions we get involved with through experience, i.e. education, worship institutions, and work related bodies (Hall, 1997). Moreover, as my participants speak a particular language, in this case either Arabic or English, they not only represent but construct at the same time an identity (ibid.). Generally speaking, the concept of identity hypothesizes and links together both individual and society. In addition, SIT recognizes that 'collective identifications' are genuine for people, and that they are based on real life experience, and strives to comprehend how 'that reality works' (Jenkins, 2014, p.150).

During my research and while asking my participants about their language choice in different domains, it was stated that they chose Arabic with their family at home out of their respect to the Emirati culture. However, and in a different setting like work or education, they chose English. They thus negotiated their linguistic identities according to the different settings and times. Therefore people have different identities always changing according to place and times thus causing contradictory identities which draw participants of a culture in diverse directions. Thus, it is individuals in a given culture that give meaning to things, events and people. We make sense of the world around us by the meaning we associate to people, happenings and objects (Hall, 1997).

Following on from the discussion on the association between language and identity, Norton (2000) analyses the relationship between language learning and identity, and states that there is a relation of power between the learners and the native speakers of the language. This power imbalance impedes the learning process. In an attempt to define 'power', Nightingale and Cromby (1999) give more than one definition. They suggest that it is the way people access and use their resources or as a commodity that can be 'seized'; a trait of community relationships; and a possession that is channelled via discourses acknowledged to be 'true'(ibid., p. 12). Whatever the definition may be, Nightingale and Cromby (ibid.) confirm that social constructionism theory does have its

limitations. They claim that it downplays three important issues: embodiment, materiality and power. They explain that we cannot ignore the significance of our bodies, without which subjectivity, language, emotions and thought would be absent. They admit that while introducing embodiment into social constructivism may be quite problematic, yet denying its impact has already created problems (*ibid.*, p. 10). In addition, the authors assert that the material world we live in is by far not uniform, however, when social constructionism views materiality as being the same, it ignores its ‘contribution to the process of social constructionism’ (*ibid.*, p. 2).

Moreover - and this is closely linked to embodiment and materiality - there exists the notion of power relations. Norton (2000) also confirms that when individuals have many resources they will consequently have power and benefits, which will in turn affect their way of perceiving the world around them. Power appears in and is exerted through discourse. While social constructionism has not fully ignored power, if discourse is not placed in the material, embodied context, power relationships then tend to be overlooked or under-estimated. Nightingale and Cromby (*ibid.*) take their argument a step further and warn that while social constructivism continues to downplay materiality and embodiment, it risks to losing its value and may even allow ‘the tide of knowledge and practice ... to sweep social constructivism away’ (p. 13).

The theory of how language learning impacts on identity is central to this research. Some researchers in various fields such as SLA and applied linguistics have tackled the subject at length. Norton (2000) draws on the post-structural theories of identity and language to provide novel views on language teaching and learning. As Block (2007a, 2007b) states, she redefined the ongoing discussions on identity and language learning and her approach to the issues of identities and SLA and to foreign language learning in general became the model (Kramsch, 2009, Pavlenko, 2003). It was the main focus of this research to investigate how learning EIL has impacted on the Emirati identities and in what ways, bearing in mind the unique demographic imbalance of the UAE, where the Arabic speaking nationals comprise the minority of the population.

We construct our identity using our language. Individuals have entrenched cultural principles and values and language helps to transfer this culture. Moreover, language is a channel through which our identity is formulated, constructed and reconstructed, confirmed and negotiated (Phan Le Ha, 2008, p.25). As mentioned earlier, social identities are changeable and ‘not fixed prior to the interaction but, rather emerge within it’ (Koven, 1998, p.413). In addition, speaking in itself is a means of representation of self and others, identity construct, and identity negotiation (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2003, p.293). Moreover, language is an instant and international symbol of an individual’s identity (Crystal, 2003). It becomes evident that language as a whole is a significant element in the formation of identity and conveyance of culture. My eight participants master and use English which is not their mother-tongue more than Arabic. Arabic is not only considered as a language but also as an identity as Emiratis are Arabs. Thus, my participants negotiate different identities when speaking Arabic or English.

Identities are changeable and thus are negotiable. Negotiation of identities and the linguistic prevalence of English is a noteworthy dimension to the settings of this study. Dissimilar identities may be ‘negotiable’ or ‘non-negotiable’ based on the different social and historical backgrounds. People position themselves or are being positioned in a range of contexts. Individuals convincingly debate various fields of interest and relativity on the issue of negotiating identities. Not only putting into consideration social justices, ‘who’ has access to ‘symbolic and material resources’, but also who is ‘in’ and who is ‘out’. People do not only explain localized linguistic behaviours, beliefs and attitudes, but also describe them in a wider social context, thus including race, ethnicity, generation, gender and sexuality (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). Moreover, negotiation of identities may be comprehended as the relationship between self-representation, and interactive positioning ‘where others attempt to position particular individuals or groups (ibid., p. 20). The authors differentiate between three kinds of identities: non-negotiable, i.e. they are fixed in time and place; assumed, i.e. identities are accepted but still non-negotiable and finally, negotiable which could be challenged by people or groups.

This section has reviewed from the body of literature different definitions of SIT by several theorists. Firstly, authors agree that identity is a complex, multifaceted and

contradictory notion rather than essentialized. Authors conform to the view that there is no simplistic view concerning identity. Secondly, that identity constructs and is constructed by language. Thirdly, that identity is dynamic, ever changing over time and place. Fourthly, that to comprehend the identity construct, one must look at it with respect to wider social processes, the relations of power being a major issue. Fifthly, authors also agree on the relationship between SIT and classroom practices.

Another significant point covered in this review is that language identity relies on expertise, affiliation and inheritance (Block, 2007). Relevant to this research, this helps me to understand that although Emirati citizens are born in the UAE (inheritance) they may not have proficiency of Arabic (expertise) or have the positive attitude (affiliation) towards Arabic (Shohamy, 2006). Finally, the above scholarly corpus indicates that EMI in education may pose detrimental effects on the mother-tongue (Tamtam, Gallager, Olabi & Naher, 2012, p. 1419). This may be true currently in the UAE context where Arabic may be negatively affected by the dominance of English in education.

The role of language and social context are significant in this research. I now draw on Critical Applied Linguistics (CAL) because it aims to recognize the link between educational and social contexts. Pennycook (2001) in his over-view of the field of CAL draws attention to several aspects of how language is used in different contexts. He clarifies that while viewing society, we must take into account the notion of social class and also the question of how inequality is shaped, maintained or reserved. A notion, which also persists on appropriateness, entails how the learners of English take the language and may use it against the 'West' in a manner which is 'appropriate' to them. He emphasizes the consequences for English language teaching and that problems may arise by stressing that the current language and sociolinguistic planning frameworks are the connection with broader questions of inequality, racism and power.

Pennycook (2001, p. 34) argues that social relations are problematic and difficult to deal with and that critical sociolinguistics tend to be concerned with how language is responsible for issues, such as inequalities in social relations. He asserts that CAL should address not only how language and society are linked, but more importantly, the ways that research should address domains such as language access, power, disparity,

desire, difference and resistance. He also explains that CAL should be held 'politically accountable' and should investigate deeper, more complex issues regarding knowledge, politics and ethics (Pennycook, 2001, p.7). Pennycook calls for more research in CAL to investigate various neglected issues concerning identity; including cultural, ethnic and national identities, sexuality and otherness. He asserts that language should at its best, be closely linked to broader political concerns, and that CAL should not look at pre-set politics placed against a stagnant set of facts. Instead, it should aim at establishing a new body of knowledge. He also believes that CAL fails to include other important concerns in the field of language use, language learning and language teaching, such as identity, sexuality, gender, cultural difference, ideology, inequality and the reproduction of otherness.

It should be viewed that in order to take on CAL, a theoretical framework regarding language, politics, social structure and pedagogy, a connection between CAL and theory should be maintained. Pennycook (2001) argues that power governs most fields of life, and that it is of interest to emphasize the issues of power, politics, empowerment and its relationship to language. Pennycook (ibid.) asserts that there are two opposing views of education: 1) views a classroom as a space for possible action and change, 2) views that a classroom is a place to promote social and cultural reproduction. He explains that critical pedagogy helps students voice their opinion in classrooms and oppose marginalization and exclusion, and that what is sorely missing is putting pedagogy into practice instead of solely maintaining the stagnant position of useless theorizing.

It is possible to assume from the above two perspectives that it is best to view language classrooms as places for social and cultural reproduction and not where the two cultures – that of the teacher and the students – struggle and collide.

Based on my observation and school visits, I found that there is currently a certain sort of collision in education in the UAE, and especially in language teaching and learning. However, this collision is not between the teacher and the student but rather between teachers. It may seem that there are tensions and a power struggle between Arabic and English teachers which do not enhance students' language learning. This is especially

true in Kindergarten where the two teachers, one teacher teaching Arabic and the other teaching English, teach a bilingual programme simultaneously in a classroom. The main reason that this tension arises might be that the Arabic teacher is often a local Emirati national or an Arab, while the English teacher is usually a native English speaker. I believe that decision makers and language policy planners should take into consideration the relationship between language and issues of power and politics.

2.4 Theoretical Framework: Social Identity Theory

In this section, I will outline the social identity theory as it pertains to second language learning, and provide a rationale for the underpinning concepts. My theoretical framework has two elements: EIL with a focus on Social identity. My concern in researching how Emirati students conceptualize the relationship between the social identity and the English language is informed by a main thread in the literature, that language is not only used as a communication tool but is also crucial in identity construction. I draw from the SIT to provide a theoretical framework that researches the role of second language learning and the social identity construct.

An interesting link between the personal and social identity is clearly explained by Pearce II (2013) in his research using the SIT to predict managers' emphases on ethical and legal values in judging business issues. Pearce II says that the SIT brings closer the psychological perspective of people's morals and actions and the sociological perspective of group behaviours (ibid., p. 499). Therefore, the SIT hypothesis that individuals' values and principles are partially formed by the groups which they perceive they belong to helped me to gain a number of key insights into the issues of social and cultural identities among Emirati EIL participants in the study. However, and as Hogg (2006) rightly argues, the SIT does not put any conceptual value on social interdependence and interaction. This theory focuses only on the abstract categories of individuals while a group can still be psychologically real without people's identification with it. Many other factors come into play for identification, such as communication, interdependence and interaction (ibid., p. 126).

Based on the nature of my research question I found it suitable to rely on the Social Identity Theory (SIT) as my theoretical framework. The SIT could be defined as how individuals perceive themselves within a group and how they attempt to exhibit positive identity in order to boost their self-esteem. The latter is mainly due to their comparison between the in-group and significant out-groups (Brown, 2000). In other words, the core of SIT hypothesizes that group members of the same group will aim to find faulty characteristics of an out-group which they do not belong to, in order to enhance their self-image.

One of the central premises of SIT is that identity is multiple, changeable and constructed. The nature of language suggests that it is a social practice rather than a fixed system of rules. Social identity theory stresses the significance of the social context in comprehending what happens in a given community, and in constructing different identities. Thus, social identity theory adopts the premise that we are constantly constructing new and diverse ways of understanding the world, i.e. our identities, and that cultures are continuously changing. No culture is inherently stable or homogenous; they are all social constructs and are therefore complex, overlapping and dynamic. In addition, social identity theory views language, communication and discourse as means to the construction process. It is through this processing of interaction that we may understand others and ourselves, i.e. comprehending our diversified social identities.

When attempting to understand what people say about their beliefs and attitudes, we should also consider the social context in which these discourses have been made. Thus, if and when the social context is changed, we are bound to receive different responses (Willig, 2008). In the area of language, Pennycook (1998) argues that language is only one possible element of discourse. Language symbolizes cultural reality; people view their language as a symbol of social identity and language also constructs social reality (Kramsch, 1998, Byram 2002). We, therefore, cannot deny the relationship between identity construction and language learning, especially in contexts where the English language is considered to have a societal and social presence (Henry & Goddard, 2015). The notion that language constructs individuals' social identity and symbolizes cultural reality is heavily discussed in the literature when conversing about SIT. In this study, I

found that all my participants did directly associate their Arabic language to their Emirati identity and especially to their religious identity because Arabic must be used while reading the Holy Koran, praying, and performing all other Islamic rituals.

People establish meanings by interacting with each other and with their social settings. In other words, individuals construct knowledge by their intrinsic engagements with others (Lock and Strong, 2010, p. 6). An important notion about SIT which is significant to this study, is that it regards meaning and comprehension between people as the pivotal characteristic of 'human activities' (ibid.). Simply put, meaning can differ greatly based on the language spoken, and therefore on the knowledge and quality of the social experience gained. For example, when two people speaking the same language experience a certain event they comprehend one thing, while another two speaking a different language, yet experiencing the same event, would gain a significantly diverse experience, a different knowledge. Thus, the latter two would acquire a different social experience because the two social experiences are socially constructed and therefore result in different social identities.

Here again, and in the research settings, I found many examples that verify the above. When some Emiratis speaking Arabic experience an event which is also shared by other English native speakers, and I asked them about their understanding, the two groups gave me two different encounters and subsequently deducted different knowledge. This confirms that language does have an influence on the constructive process of knowledge and meaning.

After giving a review from the body of literature about social identity theory that underpins my theoretical framework, in the following discussion I will explore the role of stereotyping in the construction of social identity. Motivations to stereotyping and its relationship to social identity will also be debated.

The association between language and culture has been a long standing concern in many scholarly fields. Kubota (1999) asserts that culture does have an impact on the way individuals talk and behave, and that people's lived experiences and voices are shared by members of the same culture. However, there is also variety within the same culture

as regards language, race, age and ethnicity (ibid., pp. 15-16). Language, culture and identity are all intertwined notions and by talking about ourselves, our feelings and emotions, we are identifying our identity, and who we are. In this section, I will review some of the recent literature which links the teaching of EIL with the notion of linguistic and cultural imperialism. I will first discuss the latter two notions in their broad sense.

Arab students see the significant need to learn English in order to function effectively in the global world today (Pennycook, 1994). As previously stated, English is now becoming the lingua-franca, and with globalization, has become a dominant language. Phillipson (2002) explains that when one looks at how different languages, like Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish, are distributed, it becomes apparent that the prevailing language (English) is the overriding aggressor's language. Phillipson (ibid.) also sees linguistic imperialism as a sub-set of cultural imperialism. In my view, I concur with this notion to a certain extent. I recognize the relation between teaching English as a language (linguistic imperialism,) and its accompanying culture (cultural imperialism). Phillipson rightly points out that the use of one language usually entails the exclusion of the other (ibid., p. 17). Relevant to this study, and within the UAE context where English is dominant over Arabic, English learners may currently be subjected to linguistic imperialism through the current English teaching practices. A concept, if true, may prove to be futile in developing a generation of the UAE English learners who have safeguarded and maintained their cultural and linguistic identities. This being said, the UAE students do still need to learn EIL without which the nation would be isolated from global development and prosperity (Findlow, 2005).

Phillipson (1992) suggests that although the global spread of English seems to be benign, it is far from it. He coined a term, 'linguistic imperialism' and argues that there is a strong and relevant relationship between global imperialism and the global spread of English. He thus relates his ideology of English linguistic imperialism to a wider concept that helps us recognize *exploitation*. He also asserts that although the English language may seem not to carry a set of political or social baggage, reality indicates differently. He emphasizes that English asserts its world position through continuously setting up cultural inequalities between it and other languages.

However, it is important to note that postcolonial theorists of language education such as Canagarajah (1999) and Pennycook (1994) disagree with Phillipson's view, because they stress that Phillipson's (1992) theoretical framework fails to investigate how people use the English language, and why individuals choose to use and learn English. Canagarajah (ibid.) makes a point that Phillipson's theory does not give enough, or any relevancy to the individual himself, and what is valid, and missing from Phillipson's framework is how people use English in their communities and everyday life. Phillipson thus fails to explain how marginal communities use English. Relevant to this discussion is Pennycook's (1998) belief that we must find different cultural alternatives to the current cultural constructs of colonialism while teaching English. Moreover, Pennycook (1994) rightly states that an obvious display of modern neo-colonialism is the intentional efforts exerted to place English as a 'worldly' global tool. He also argues that educational institutions are not merely a place where information is given but are 'cultural and political arenas' (ibid., p. 297).

Studies in the literature have indicated that Phillipson's (1992) perception regarding the cultural politics of language teaching is that there is a clear division into two, especially mutually exclusive or contradictory groups or entities, within the English-speaking world. He believes that the world of language is about the competition of resources; and that politics play a pivotal role, seeing the UK and the USA as centre nations. This reductive division is refuted by Pennycook (1998) and Canagarajah (1999).

Therefore, the issue here is related to power; should English and its associated cultures be taught or not. These authors aim to determine whether English is a valuable resource for third World countries or just another instrument of those who wish to perpetuate their oppression. They advocate the need for a *third way* that does not take the two extremes of teaching English by either refusing it totally because of its imperialistic nature or accepting it indiscriminately for its payback profit. Canagarajah (1999) affirms that periphery English language teaching (ELT) students face a dilemma because these students need to learn English and at the same time have fears of *ideological/ linguistic hegemony*. He suggests that the only way to resolve this is to introduce a pedagogy that will cater for the students' needs of learning English while at the same time establishing

a mode of teaching English that does not conflict with their own values and requirements. This may be true in some English language teaching contexts but should not be generalized across all countries.

However, the above concept of linguistic imperialism may seem somehow currently intense because English is now dominant as it is directly related to the global economy, technology, science, finance and many other fields. As Phillipson (1992) rightly states, English is equated with prosperity and progress. This researcher believes that without proficiency in English in many societies, including in the UAE, it becomes quite difficult to move up the ladder of economic prosperity and societal status. Part of this study's intention is to investigate how Emirati students view the English language and its relationship to their world view, how their identities have changed or been appropriated after learning English. Pertinent to this issue and a significant point to this research is Canagarajah's (2005) helpful assertion that there is no best way to teach English in a globalized world and that local teachers are best to teach English; better than outsiders as they are more competent to understand their own learners. Based on the data of this research, I would highly support the suggestion that local teachers teach English after obtaining relevant training.

In this regard, Canagarajah (2005) and Lin (2007) declare that TESOL should now be called TEGCOM, i.e. Teaching English for Glocalized Communication. The term 'Glocal' would stand for both local and global contexts. This shift would secure a better understanding of identity, appropriation and how English is used in different contexts. It would also include a more profound comprehension of diverse cultural settings and finally a better understanding of local beliefs and pedagogical practices. In brief, it would cater for local knowledge and practices which is currently being demeaned in the teaching of English under the justification of the 'imported notions of 'progress' and innovation' (Canagarajah, 2005, p. x).

Pennycook (1998) argues that language is only one possible element of the discourse. Language symbolizes cultural reality; people view their language as a symbol of social identity, and language also constructs social reality (Kramsch, 1998; Byram 2002). Burr

(1995) explains that certain reality constructions through language are more acceptable than others, and that clearly explains the power relations. For example, how and why are certain accounts disregarded and dispensed with, while others are heard and become '*truths*'. She explains that individuals do not only use language – words and symbols – in a descriptive manner, but in an influential and convincing manner for their own ends. She adds that discourse is not only verbal and bodily gestures, but may also include visual images such as advertisements, films and clothes. Schwandt (2003, p. 40) believes that truth and knowledge are not a result of the cognitive processes but are created. That is why one truth to a person may not be the truth to another since these truths are socially created or constructed.

When it comes to social realities or truths, Burr (1995) believes there is a relational process between actors who construct their own social realities. Such reality only exists because of social development, which cannot be discovered, and does not actually exist prior to that. However, and although constructivism suggests that knowledge is a result of the mental construct, social constructionism stresses the social and does not pay attention to the cognitive processes of knowledge (Young and Colin, 2004, p.39). This knowledge or the 'knowing' is pursued by individuals in an attempt to understand what it actually means to be human without relying on scientific knowledge (Steedman, 2000).

Following this approach, Burr (1995) makes the point that learning is also a social process. Social constructivists believe that students cannot learn by themselves, or from the teacher alone. Only through collaborative approaches between students and teachers can learning take place. It is the integration of students in the teaching/learning process, the accommodation of new information, and social activities that result from these interactions that best yield learning results. English teachers perhaps should not aim to achieve specific pre-set objectives during the educational process, but rather teach with the aim of generating significant events for students, to promote positive identity development.

In this section, I have outlined the theory of linguistic imperialism as popularized by Phillipson (1992) and explored his concept of the colonial dichotomy: that the world is divided into two; the superiors and the inferiors, 'us' and 'them'. It has become evident that what is needed is a third place whereby English language learners are taught. In other words, to design a new pedagogy of teaching English that would cater for the learners' needs, and at the same time respect students' own ideologies, ethics and morals.

The discussion of linguistic imperialism leads us to another significant and relevant notion, that of cultural imperialism. There are multiple discourses of cultural imperialism. Some studies have indicated that the 'West' generated a certain image of the Middle East and Asia, viewing them with prejudice, racism and identifying them as uncivilized and ignorant of their own history and culture. The 'West' has thus formed its own version of the culture and history for the people living in these regions.

Within this framework lies the concept of 'Orientalism'. Said (1979) explains that the West divided the world into two parts; the West, comprising mainly the USA, France and the UK, and the Middle East and Asia. This was based on the concept of 'us' and 'them'; 'us' being the Europeans who were civilized, cultured, and developed, while 'them' meaning the ignorant and uncivilized Middle East and Asia. This division implied that the Europeans used 'Orientalism' to identify themselves. Said (ibid.) asserts that these Western states conceived of themselves as the superior race, and justified their imperialism and colonization through this notion.

Europeans were powerful and articulate while the Middle East and Asia were defeated and distant. He explains that the Europeans also believed that they had the right to represent the '*orientals*' to the West and thus formed the image of the Middle East and Asia, which was their own perception of the orient, and not a true one, but rather only as seen through their Eurocentric eyes. The teams sent to silently observe the '*orientals*' gave a socially constructed view of them, and generalised whatever was seen as '*oriental culture*' and without analysing whether it was an individual action or not (Said, 1979). Another characteristic of Orientalism was that it explained 'oriental culture' in comparison to 'western culture'. For example, and on the same grounds that the religion

of Christ was termed Christianity, it labelled the followers of Islam as devotees of ‘Mohammadism’, which has negative association in European discourse. This term was created and used only by Europeans and tended not to be known by Muslims (Said, 1979).

Imperialism was not only exercised in the past, but it remains a current discourse between the peoples and the dominant *hegemony of the empire* which is clearly manifested in the postcolonial ‘Western literature’ (Said, 1993). This theory is used in analysing culture and emphasizes the limitations put on colonized people, which has an impact on the construction of and quest for their social and economic goals. Western authors and audiences have come to form the concept of ‘us’ meaning the West and ‘them’ meaning the Middle East and Asia, through fictional viewpoints outlined in their literary work (ibid.).

As regards the concept of Orientalism, the ‘West’ has always been the bodyguard of ancient cultures that portray the Orient in an everlasting earlier period. This representation is often of a gloomy and uncivilized nature. If one is to examine several well-known novels and films, the ‘*white man*’ is always depicted as being the bearer of wisdom and knowledge. In addition, the orient has been the mere creation of the ‘West’ to conform to the fears and concerns of precisely the West (Sardar, 1999).

However, Irfan (2007) highly criticizes Said’s notion of Orientalism and clarifies several flaws. Irfan (ibid.) states that Orientalism encompasses the entire ‘West’ when it suggests that the West have this demeaning and diminutive view of the Orient. This generalization, I concur, is indicative of a rather essentialist view which sweeps across time, place, culture, languages, disciplines, political interests, to name but a few (ibid., p.695). Simply put, Orientalism emphasizes that there is but one aspect of how this phenomenon operates in the same way across all the previous domains. However, Said’s orientalism theory is rather outdated, and as such, it needs some refinements today by looking at the peculiarities, and in this study, the specifics of the UAE context which must be taken into consideration.

Overall, this section has described Said's (1993, 1978) theory of how the Middle Eastern and Asian people have been socially constructed and how the Europeans imposed imperialism on them through social constructivism. This section also underlined the fact that incorrect conceptions by the West of Middle Eastern culture have proven to be their own creation. It was also underlined, furthermore, how the West culturally dominated the Orient by creating an artificial cultural vision of the Middle East and Asia. Finally, this section has given examples of how Said's Orientalism was not left without criticism and how his postcolonial critics contested his argument.

After defining some significant strands in the literature pertaining to cultural imperialism, it is important to shed light on and discuss linguistic imperialism and its effect on language teaching in general and on English in particular, as well as its role in the construct of social identity. The following section aims to review the two basic concepts of culture; i.e. essentialism and non-essentialism, and to explain their relationship in the language learning process. This includes a discussion as to whether the English language can be taught and learned in isolation from its associated culture.

Two paradigms of culture, essentialism and non-essentialism are consistent with a SIT perspective. This section will highlight some approaches to language and culture and will aim to explain how different views of culture may hamper or develop learning, especially in the foreign language classroom. Moreover, as language, culture and identity are interwoven, it is hoped that, by exploring the two main paradigms of culture, complementary perspectives on social identities are offered.

Firstly, let us explore some different definitions of culture as presented in the body of literature. Culture per se may be one of the most difficult concepts to define. Culture exemplifies the finest traits that could describe a community or society and is usually the sum of magnificent ideas represented in works of literature, music, paintings and philosophy. It can also be defined as a set of shared values and principles of a group of people belonging to a certain society (Hall, 1997). Not only that, but Hall (*ibid.*) asserts that more relevant to this study is the fact that culture is concerned with the construction and exchange of meanings between people in a given society or community.

Therefore, when two people belong to one culture, that would mean they construe the world almost in the same manner and can articulate their beliefs and feelings towards the world in ways that are almost the same and are comprehended by both. Thus, culture depends on how people interpret their surrounding events and how they understand the world and construct knowledge in almost the same manner. However, this concentration on 'shared meaning' may wrongly interpret culture to be unitary and too cognitive. There are many different meanings and several interpretations to one issue. We should not forget that, as mentioned before, culture is also about concepts, ideas, emotions and feelings (Hall, 1997).

Kramsch (1998) identifies three ways in which language and culture are tied together. First, language expresses a cultural reality in that people express facts and ideas with words, and it also reflects attitudes and beliefs. Second, language embodies cultural reality; individuals give meaning to their experiences through the means of communication. Lastly, language symbolizes cultural reality; people view their language as a symbol of social identity. Culture is a notoriously difficult term to define, since researchers view it differently depending on which discipline they come from: psychology, anthropology, linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and so on. In general, anthropologists define culture as 'the social constructs that evolve within a group ... in the socialization process' (Hinkel, 1999, p.3). In addition, language and culture are so intertwined that you cannot separate them apart without losing the significance of either one (Brown, 2000).

Prodromou (1988) draws our attention to the nature of language and the social, cultural, and ideological connotations and denotations which are viewed differently by people, and 'particularly in EFL situations where cultures make contact and often collide' (pp. 82-83). To deal with such collisions, educators might use the students' own culture to facilitate the construction of knowledge, and how they must make an effort to explicitly teach students' home culture (Beykont, 2002).

It can be said that literature in the social sciences examines culture from two major paradigms: essentialism and non-essentialism. Of course we must acknowledge that such dichotomies create one of the problems in the field because, in reality, views vary

across the continuum. The essentialist paradigm may be characterized as positivist in that it assumes concrete reality. This perspective still prevails to a large extent in the social sciences. In contrast, the non-essentialist view is characterized as interpretivist. This remains relatively unknown (Holliday, 1999).

The essentialist paradigm examines culture as a physical entity which can be seen, touched and visited. Moreover, the essentialist national culture includes sub-cultures which may differ according to the characteristics of smaller entities, while at the same time preserving the most important national features. Back in 1998, Holliday warned that the essentialist view is the currently prevailing approach in applied linguistics and language education, where 'national culture is closely associated with national language, and 'language learning therefore involves culture learning' (Holliday, 1998, p. 39). Finally, it is worth noting that a key motif of essentialism is the tendency to explain other cultures as less complex than their reality. This argument may be rather disturbing because it indicates that the essentialist version of culture may now have a popular grip, which makes me question whether this is beneficial in a language classroom context. Based on my own teaching experience, I found that when both the target language culture and that of the learner are given due consideration, the learning process may benefit.

In the area of foreign language teaching/learning, this essentialist paradigm forms an easy approach for teachers towards their students. This is a concept significant to this research, as it serves to explain some of the underlying reasons for maintaining national identity among Emirati English learners in the UAE context. On the other hand, as we have seen, a non-essentialist position takes a much more complex view of culture. National culture is a social construct that governments promote through education and the media (Anderson, 1983; Holliday, 1998). Holliday adds that in a classroom environment, the essentialist would expect a teacher to come from one culture and the student from another, thus creating a possible conflict or clash between the two cultures.

Yet from a non-essentialist standpoint, the classroom would form one small culture, and we would try to see how its dynamics work. One culture would be formed by teachers and students together. This would allow us to see culture per se and not to view it

through preconceived characteristics that would mark out one group from another. In addition, it would facilitate social behaviour to *speak for itself*. Furthermore, Beykont (2002) believes that educators might use the students' own culture to facilitate the construction of knowledge, and that they must also make an effort to explicitly teach the students' home culture. My own view accords with that of Beykont in this regard.

This section has sought to clarify two paradigms of how culture is viewed. It was clear from the literature that the bi-polar explanation of culture, i.e. essentialism and non-essentialism does not actually lead to reality and that truth lies somewhere in between the two extremes. The literature suggests that the non-essentialist paradigms of culture would be more beneficial and lead to better intercultural communication, especially within the language-learning classroom. Overall, the essentialist approach *otherises* and *reduces*. The latter has now become to be known in literature as 'orientalism' by which we categorize others and refer to them as being inferior (Holliday, 1998). In sum, the above section has clarified how culture is constructed, and that it varies according to time and place, and changes through words, gestures, and different means of communication. The coming section seeks to critically review research that discusses the relationship between stereotyping and the construction of social identity.

The SIT specifies that social identity is individuals' knowledge that they belong to a certain category or group. These group members hold common identifications and view themselves as members belonging to the same social category (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 225). Groups differentiate from and discriminate against other groups so that they raise their social evaluation and self-esteem. Therefore, by doing so, by constructing their social identity they are stereotyping. Individuals stereotype because they may have unsatisfactory social identity and by doing so, they aim to acquire or enhance their identification through assimilation or competition. Another important point is that in order to achieve distinction, individuals tend to emphasize the difference between their in-group and out-group, and thus internalize stereotypes which give them a sense of 'similarity with other group members, and attractiveness or esteem' (Jenkins, 2014, p.113).

Stereotyping plays a significant role in the construction of social identity. The two main strands of the social identity process are mainly self-categorization and social comparison (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). Therefore, as individuals process their social identity they are already stereotyping against others who do not belong to their in-group or are different. They view themselves together with the members of their group as having the same social category. In addition, the centre of the SIT hypothesizes that individuals belonging to one group will aim to find negative or wrong characteristics in the other group to which they do not belong so that they would improve their self-image (Brown, 2000). This differentiation is in itself stereotyping.

As mentioned above, people resort to categorizing to abridge the multifaceted world they live in. Stereotypes protect people from viewing the world ‘steadily and see it whole’ (Lippmann, 1922, p.17). Lippmann rightly believes that individuals do not only judge others by what they see but also by what is already entrenched in their minds (ibid., p. 19). I agree with Lippmann that categorization is a necessity because in sorting people and events as generalities or types, one avoids much complex detail. Such details are practically impossible to take into consideration in such a busy world.

Conforming to Hilton & von Hippel, (1996), and Lippmann (2009), Tajfel (1981) agrees with the view that stereotype introduces straightforwardness and ease where there is difficulty and accidental disparities, but adds that this results in a categorization process. These categories given to people in accordance to their social identity are created over quite a considerable period of time within a certain culture. Furthermore, stereotyping, categorizing and social representations are basic cognitive processes that every individual needs to process in order to ‘systematize and simplify his environment’ (Tajfel, 1982, p. 279). Thus the need becomes evident that whether we approve of stereotypes or not, they are a necessity.

Individuals adopt short-cuts to simplify their environment due to their cognitive limitation in the form of stereotypes (McGarty, Yzerbyt and Spears, 2002, p. 4). This limited capacity therefore leads individuals to simplify and manage the complex information which is a result of the very multifaceted world we live in (Jenkins, 2014, p. 113). Yet, and in a cognitive analysis, Tajfel (1969), McGarty, Yzerbyt and Spears,

(2002) view stereotypes as a basic product of our ever changing social environment. In addition, it is suggested that it comes prior to reasoning; it is rather a perception which is typified by a specific trait on the 'data of our sense' before it reaches the intelligence (Tajfel, 1982 p. 75).

The concept of categorization is often confused with stereotyping. While Lippmann (1922) tends to use the processes of stereotyping and categorizing interchangeably, Allport (1954), Pickering (2004) and Tajfel (1981) argue differently. They confirm that stereotyping is constructed by creating categories of very complex data that humans must process to understand the world they live in. Through categorization, people handle the enormous amount of data they are faced with.

Reflecting on the cultural and linguistic imperialism notions previously discussed in section 2.6.1 and 2.6.2 of this chapter, I would like now to focus on the association between stereotyping and the concept of colonial dichotomy. Said's (1979, 1978) concept of 'Orientalism' divided the world into West and Middle East and Asia. This dichotomy was based on the notion of 'superior' and 'inferior', 'us' and 'them' meaning the cultured and developed Europeans and the uneducated and uncivilized Middle East and Asia. The 'West' needed this division to identify themselves as the superiors in order to justify their occupations and colonization.

In addition, Phillipson (1992) restates the existence of this dichotomy when explaining his notion of linguistic imperialism. He demonstrated that English is widely spread due to institutional structures, because it is the Western media language 'linguicism' and because of the widespread ideology that English is the superior language. Here again showing the division between languages, one being English as superior while other languages are inferior. 'Europe' and the 'Other', 'Self' and 'Other' these constructs are hard to separate. This division was not only a justification for colonization but was a cultural condition that was generated by colonization (Pennycook, 1998).

Our held beliefs concerning certain social groups influence our communication, perception, judgments and behaviour with individuals identified as members of these groups. More significantly, and with much bearing on this research, when people

perceive others on the basis that they come from a different social group, this perception becomes 'contaminated by discriminatory values' (Oakes, Haslam and Turner, 1994, p. 2). The individuals who are doing the stereotyping are positively self-viewing themselves while demeaning the groups that are being stereotyped (Turner, 2008, p.30, Tajfel, 1982). Both sides use stereotyping to their benefit (Pickering, 2001, p. 47). Relevant to this context, while people are stereotyping others, they themselves are being stereotyped (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

In addition, stereotypes may be faulty at times because they merely construct an abridged view of the complex real world. To confirm this notion, the demeaning associations of stereotyping and stereotype is the fact that they are unchangeable (Hinton, 1993, p.5). Concurring with this discussion, Lippmann (1992) agrees that stereotypes are about assigning characteristics to social groups which are faulty in content, challenge change and are wrongly constructed. In addition, and as stereotypes occur from over-generalizations, they are by nature wrong (Allport, 1954, p. 9). On the other hand, not all stereotypes are negative and untrue, some may even be useful and essential (Schneider, 2004, p. 8). Schneider argues that the content of some of the stereotypic traits' may have an exaggerated 'kernel-of-truth' (ibid., p. 333).

Although Allport (1954) considers prejudice to be 'an antipathy based on a faulty and inflexible generalization' (p. 9), Schneider (2004) asserts that people and social scientists do not wish to believe that stereotypes, especially the ones with negative connotations, could be true (ibid., p. 330). In addition, one of the main instances when stereotype beliefs are reinstated in our minds is when our expectations of certain behaviours conform to the already entrenched stereotype (Hinton, 1993, p.70). Stereotypes become rigid and 'insensitive to change in reality' (Lippmann, 1922, p.65) and allow the actual time and realities of space and relationships to be fixed, unchanged; i.e. they firmly fix in place and time people or cultures (ibid., p. 35; Pickering, 2001, p.47).

An extensive body of literature addresses the reasons behind stereotyping, and in the coming sections I will review the following main motives for stereotypic thinking and discuss the three motivational factors respectively. I have prioritized the motivational

factors and will begin with the motivation of protecting one's cultural traditions and safeguarding self-respect because of their relevance to this study. It also significantly links with my main research questions in that the importance of preserving the Emirati heritage, traditions and cultural identity were significant issues raised by participants of this study.

Overcoming stereotypes entails viewing people as individuals and not as group members. Having the mental capacity to regard people as individuals may be true, but I believe that Schneider (2004) overlooks the importance of motivational factors and their impact on changing stereotypes. Individuals may have the cognitive ability to override stereotypes, but we need the motivation, the appropriate context, and the will to do so. Given the definition of stereotype which is generally agreed upon by Lippmann et al., (1992), it becomes interesting to recognize several motivational factors which lead to stereotypic thinking.

As mentioned earlier, stereotypic thinking usually arises from cultural traits assigned to certain group members. Individuals resort to stereotyping for several main reasons: firstly, to safeguard their cultural traditions and guarantee their self-respect (Lippmann, 1922, Kumaravadivelu, 2003); secondly, to simplify their perception of the complex world around them through categorization. This simplification is also economical as it saves time and effort (McGarty, Yezzerbyt & Spears (2002, p.2) but it is also due to cognitive capacity limitations (Lippmann, 1922, Allport, 1954, Hinton, 1993, 2000).

Stereotypes emanate from culture tradition and therefore the previous discussion could be interpreted as individuals resorting to stereotyping in order to safeguard their cultural identities and self-respect. People construct stereotypes not only as a short cut to a complex reality but also to safeguard their self-respect; to project a sense of worth and value to the world. Individuals feel respected in society by the stereotypes they construct which acts as a stronghold for their values and traditions (Lippmann, 1992, p. 9). When people safeguard, through stereotyping, their self-esteem and their cultural traditions, they do so in order to project a favourable image of who they are, of their identity; they are constructing their social identity. It thus appears that cultural traditions are a key component of stereotyping. Conforming to this argument is that stereotyping entails

assigning qualities of universal psychological traits to large human groups which originate in cultural traditions (Tajfel, 1981).

However, not all stereotypes are instigated from cultural or sub-cultural traditions as stated by Tajfel et al. (1981, p.132). Some stereotypes may be the results of cultural backgrounds but others could be products of our own past experiences, whether good or bad (Schneider, 2004, p.322). Therefore Schneider argues that what we encounter in our lives, whether positive or negative, may be one of the causes of our stereotypic thinking.

The colonial dichotomy popularized by Phillipson (1992), that the world is divided into the 'superior' and the 'inferior', the 'us' and 'them', is in a way stereotyping. In addition, Said's 'Orientalism' (1993) also identifies how the West and 'them' meaning the Middle East and Asia were viewed. This proves that the 'West' had and still has a stereotypical view of the Middle East and Asia, and has categorized the 'Other' as demeaning and of less value and vice versa. Categorizing the 'Other' and having diminutive views is significant to this thesis. I believe that the Emirati participants did feel and speak about the expatriates within the concept of 'them' and 'us' and vice versa.

Stereotypes are always used by people in a social context to develop information about others by simplifying a compound reality and multifaceted environment (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996, p. 262). This complex reality is based on the knowledge we acquire about others. However, this knowledge does not represent a true reality of the world because people, events and our surrounding environment are too complex and versatile (Lippmann, 1922, p.16). Therefore, one of the motivational factors that lead people to stereotype is to create an untrue picture of reality which is easier to handle (ibid., p. 25).

People generalize and fix in time and place certain characteristics, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours to a given social group without discriminating between individual differences or other variables (Lippmann, 1992, p. 35, Pickering, 2001, p. 47). Stereotyping others also helps to safeguard peoples' self-respect (Lippmann, 1992, p. 9). It is worth noting here that Holliday, (1998, p. 39) warns that the essentialist view is currently dominating language education. He furthermore asserts that language learning

involves culture learning. Lippmann (1922) was the first to popularize the term ‘stereotype’. He characterized it as being a misrepresentation of reality which is misconceived by the prejudices of the stereotyper. Stereotyping involves social categorization. Thus stereotyping totally ignores the differences between people and perceives all individuals belonging to the same category or group as one (Hinton, 1993, 2000; Pickering, 2001; Hall & du Gay, 1996; Tajfel 1982, 1978; McGarty, Yzerbyt & Spears, 2002; Schneider, 2004; Lippmann, 1992; Allport 1954; and Oakes, Haslam and Turner, 1994). Moreover, another standard definition of stereotypes is that in addition to the same beliefs about members of a certain group, it also includes theories regarding why special traits and attributes go together and how (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996, p.240).

In summary, I have discussed in this section my theoretical framework for this research and how SIT was a suitable paradigm. The theory of cultural and linguistic imperialism has also been covered. In this section, I have also articulated the role of stereotyping in the construction of social identity. The following final section of this literature review discusses English as a medium of instruction in education in general with specific focus on the UAE. This topic is of significance to my research.

2.5 English as a Medium of Instruction in Education in the UAE

English as a medium of instruction in education in the UAE is a key element of my study. Using a language does not only entail mastering its syntax and morphology but more importantly, it means assuming its culture and ‘supporting the weight of a civilization’ (Fanon, 1991, p. 18). This means that when Emirati students are taught and use English, they are not only using the language but are also immersed in its culture. Therefore the question germane to this discussion is how far a native Arabic speaker should follow a ‘symptom of neo-colonialist power’ where Arabic is degraded as being non-useful and the Arab culture is regarded as ‘other’ (Findlow, 2006, p. 21). In addition, children’s basic learning needs in schools must take into consideration the culture, needs and opportunities of the community, bearing in mind that education in the mother-tongue strengthens cultural identity and heritage (UNESCO, 2000, p. 76).

Within the context of UAE, children should learn English but that should not interfere or override Arabic, because without a good understanding of their mother tongue, the acquisition of English basically through studying, will be problematic and may hinder learning the second language. Another UNESCO report specifically talking about bilingualism within the context of the UAE emphasized the role of the curriculum in the early stages of learning. This report states that there is a need to establish a national curriculum that would represent the goals and aspirations of the nation, would manage the Emiratis' local environment and would endorse national identity (UNESCO, 2010).

This research aimed to investigate how Emirati students conceptualize the relationship between social identity and the English language. Within the context of this research, English is not only learned and used as medium of instruction only in schools and in the everyday life of the Emirati student, but also it is the medium of instruction in higher education.

Literature covering the topic of English as a medium in higher education gives several benefits and drawbacks regarding teaching and learning English. In addition to better meta-cognitive skills, proponents claim that due to globalization, English should be mastered because it is the gateway to economic, international knowledge and work prosperity. In an attempt to decrease the negative and increase the positive approaches of EMI, Jusuf (2003) proposes partial immersion pedagogy. This concept allows both students and teachers to use the mother tongue when English obstructs comprehension. Reviewing language - English in this argument - as a medium of higher education is a complex issue because it is directly associated with symbolic capital, construction of social identity, cultural reality and supporting the language's civilization. The choice of language in higher education depends on the language policy stipulated by the government or other authoritative body in the country. A language policy framework is comprised of mainly three components: language beliefs or ideologies, language practices, and language management (Spolsky, 2004). Firstly, language beliefs are made up of what people consider as appropriate language choices as dictated by their entrenched assumptions and attitudes (*ibid.*). Secondly, language practices represent the behaviours and language choices people actually make and not what they should make.

Thirdly, language management - language policy - refers to individuals or institutions that have the authority to intentionally change or establish peoples' language practices or alter or modify their language beliefs (Spolsky, 2004). The latter point is agreed by Shohamy (2006) who takes this construct further and states that language management usually includes decisions on language policy and medium of instruction that are frequently kept away from public awareness. Shohamy (ibid.) rightly argues that language practices rarely represent the free choice of the people. She confirms that in some contexts, language practices are involuntary. Due to ignorance and/or lack of representation of a large number of the population, language practices are forced upon them and not chosen in a democratic manner, but rather in an authoritarian process (ibid.). Every educational and linguistic context is unique in its own way; however, a country like Malaysia is a good example of a post-colonial nation currently using the medium of English in higher education.

Globalization brings with it the English language which has led to cultural identities being disturbed. Simply put, the increasingly widespread use of English has resulted in the disruption of identities in post-colonial countries such as Malaysia. This disruption is evident in English displacing *BahasaMalaysia* (Malay) in Malaysia (Mandal, 2010, p. 1002). When a country's cultural identity is at risk, much more is endangered including its linguistic identity because culture encompasses language. In section 2.6.2 under Linguistic Imperialism, it was discussed that Pennycook (1994) also warns that it is a form of neo-colonialism when people intentionally exert efforts to place English as a global tool instead of their own national language. In addition, and what is relevant to this research, Pennycook asserts that educational institutions are a place where diverse morals are in struggle (ibid., p. 297).

This struggle, I believe, is due to cultural clashes because when English is used, its accompanying culture is also put into force. Such cultural power is directly linked to language dominance. The dominance of the universal language [English] exemplifies deep rooted English values (Kayman, 2007, p. 7). Moreover, there is a strong association between language [English] dominance and cultural power and such a

relationship is only increasing over time. In addition, English has now become the only medium of international communication (Crystal, 2003).

I agree with Shohamy's (2006) claim that actual language policy aims are often hidden from the general public. I believe this may be true within the UAE context. The publicized government language policy, specifically as regards language medium in schools and higher education may not be actually implemented on the ground. I observed a controversial misalignment: the public awareness campaign to promote and use Arabic in schools and universities, the establishment of a Centre for Arabic language, the UAE signing of 'The Arabic Language Charter' (Emirates 24/7) and most importantly, article Seven of the UAE constitution states that Arabic is the official language:

Article 7: Islam is the official religion of the Union [The UAE]. The Islamic Shari'ah [Islamic Law] shall be a main source of legislation in the Union. The official language of the Union is Arabic (ACE, 1996).

The above article also states that the nation's official religion and the main source of its legislation is Islam. The significance of the Arabic language is thus emphasized more than once as a language and through religion. However, in the UAE English is the medium of instruction in private and public higher institutions. In addition, mathematics and science subjects are taught in English in schools, leaving Arabic only to be taught as a language, for Islamic studies and Social studies.

The public awareness campaign pertaining to the importance of Arabic in the UAE is exemplified by one of its rulers. His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai said:

'Our national identity is integrally linked to the Arabic language, which serves as an effective medium to express our values, culture and heritage. Promoting the language will enable our future generations to connect with our roots, society and values more effectively' (Emirates 24/7).

National identity and national culture are social constructs that governments endorse through education and the media (Anderson, 1983; Holliday, 1998). With globalization and marketization entering higher education, the English medium in higher education is increasingly being adopted across the globe (Hu, Lei, 2014). Moreover, globalization has helped to increase the widespread use of English and vice versa (Graddol, 1997). The UAE context is no exception. However, and as local languages are becoming ‘less prestigious contexts of use’ and English is strengthening its hegemony, these national languages [in this context Arabic] may be under risk of extinction (Doiz, Lasagabaster, Sierra, 2013, p. xiv). In other words, when government policies encourage the teaching/learning of English it is at the expense of the students’ mother tongue (Tollefson, 2013). Conforming to this view, in several countries who have adopted EMI, they stand the risk of cultural identity loss (Crystal, 2003).

If language can be used as symbolic power, violence and a form of linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991), Findlow (2006) rightly asks whether responding to global market needs justifies native Arabic speakers in the UAE continuing their higher education in English. Moreover, whether it is the correct language shift in a country where Arabic is being demeaned and Arab culture is considered as ‘other’ (ibid.). It is important here to point out that when students feel that their mother tongue and cultural identity are positively valued, they are more likely to experience positive self-esteem. This self-worth will increase their motivation for successfully learning both their first and second languages (Diaz, 1983).

Culture and language are interlinked and non-detachable (Brown, 2000). Language expresses, embodies and symbolizes cultural reality (Kramsch, 1998). Therefore any change in language consequently entails change in culture. Thus, languages – in this case English – exert symbolic violence, which is reflected in certain values, together with what knowledge and skills are to be adopted by the host – in this case Arabic – culture (Pennycook, 1989).

This argument may lead us to see only the negative effects of the English medium in higher education because of its debilitating effect on the host culture. When English is

used as the language medium in higher education, many diversified issues should be taken into consideration; especially in the context of the UAE where English is not the students' mother tongue. The literature reviewed is quite contentious about this debate. Proponents justify the use of another language, in this case English because it can aid students to obtain better meta-cognitive thinking, yet Findlow (2006) argues that the risks are too high. However, and contrary to the latter stance, there is a view that not offering EMI in higher education jeopardizes students' opportunities to be aware of the scientific and academic worlds (Costa and Coleman, 2012, p. 5). In regard to the UAE context, I concur with the latter view because Emiratis do need to obtain scientific and academic knowledge so as not to fall behind in their nation's striving for international development and growth. We must not forget that the UAE is still a very young country and is in a developmental phase.

Moreover, and especially in the Arabian world, introducing the English medium in higher education not only poses a decline in the use of Arabic but there is also fear about the undesirable impact of foreign teachers on students' world view (Tamtam, Gallagher, Olabi, Naher, 2012, p. 1422). In addition, English has become engrained in the Arab world especially after the second Gulf War (Zughoul, 2003). I believe the foreign teachers' negative influence was sometimes apparent in this case study. When English is the medium in higher education, the English language together with its 'Western' culture is also introduced. This 'culture' is entirely alien to the values, Islamic ideologies and the Arabism of the Emirati culture. Thus, an evident cultural clash is imminent. Nevertheless, Tong and Cheung (2011, p. 56) argue differently, and claim that when people opt to follow the 'western' culture they do so after they modify, 'localise' it to suit their desires. I agree with Tong and Cheung (2011) that Emiratis who do chose to follow the 'western' culture 'localise' or adapt it so as not to clash with their own needs.

To illustrate how other Arab countries fear the impact of EMI, Libya until date has not complied with the globalization call and does not implement EMI in order to maintain the Arabic language (Tamtam, 2011). It is important here to state that in the UAE

context, it is not the free choice of the people but rather that of the government language policy decision makers.

The paradox here is that Emirati students should learn English because it is the gatekeeper to a globalized world but without endangering their linguistic and cultural identity. Therefore, in order to solve this dilemma, a solution may be through appropriating English in manners that ‘do least damage’ to students’ mother-tongue and national identity. This appropriation may involve, but not be limited to, two approaches: either pedagogical practice by not privileging western ideas or by allowing students to project their nationalities and identity through English, i.e. they do not need to master the English accent as it is a universal language (Graddol, 2006, p. 116). Another solution may be through partial immersion whereby the students and/or teachers may resort to their mother tongue in time of need when comprehension is at risk (Jusuf, 2001).

In addition, English as medium in higher education poses double difficulties: the challenge of understanding the academic English language and the comprehension of the subject content taught. I believe this leads to inequality between students. The students who master English have the upper hand over the students who have full command of the subject content yet with lower English proficiency. Moreover, some blame the government for using English in higher education which has led to the disappearance of Arabic from universities in the UAE (Al Lawati, 2011). In addition to the latter downside, the English medium of instruction in particular and proficiency in English in general has been proven to be the ‘main mechanisms for structuring inequality’ in different contexts (Graddol, 2006, p. 38).

I would like to point out that it may be justifiable for the UAE government to adhere to EMI in higher education. The challenges are vast, and there is a strong need to educate Emirati students to compete in the global market. However, there must be a balance between safeguarding the Emirati linguistic, cultural and social identity and educating an Emirati individual with a global perspective who masters English. To this end, the UAE higher education policy is viewed to have as its focus the nation-state identity. For example, higher education institutions have been obliged to include in their brochures an extract describing how they will promote and provide courses about ‘Arab-Islamic

cultural values' (Findlow, 2005, p. 297). It is worth noting here that the policy emphasizes and associates the Arabic language with Islamic and cultural values, which are basic ingredients of the Emirati identity. Relevant to this discussion is the fact that when foreign universities opened branches in the UAE and did not adhere to or know about the UAE's cultural requirements; it may have been one of the main reasons behind their closing down (Mahani & Molki, 2011, p. 6).

As English has now become the lingua franca in today's globalized world, more and more non-English speaking countries consider English a pre-requisite in many fields, more so in higher education. The effect of this language shift has implications not only for the national languages but also for identity formation and negotiation. Thus cultural identities are of paramount importance in the globalized context. Coleman (2006) suggests that as language use and the economics of higher education are products of globalization, the coming generations will become 'diglossic' (p. 11). In other words, individuals are foreseen as using their mother tongue for culture and identity expression and English for formal communication.

Within the context of this research, I believe that to strike the balance between mastering the English language and not endangering the linguistic and cultural identities of the Emiratis, it may be advisable for the UAE to adopt the integrated content and language in higher education (ICLHE) approach (Costa and Coleman, 2006, p.5). This approach is a European movement and has several benefits such as results in better language and content for learners and, motivates teachers and students in teaching and learning in higher education (Wolff, 2007). Another approach may be through providing special texts which would be prepared for students using the English medium in higher education. Such texts would be prepared in English integrating subject matter with the native language supplement explanations. At the same time, class discussions and lectures would still be provided in English. The main advantage of such an approach would be to maintain 'immersion learning techniques' (Collins, 2010, p. 98).

In schools, content and language integrated learning (CLIL) safeguards the students' mother tongue, and although it is a sort of bilingualism, it does not target balanced bilingualism (Garcia, 2009). It is an approach that integrates language with content.

CLIL entails that the student is not expected to entirely master the English language while studying a specific subject such as science or mathematics. It is a way of teaching curriculum subjects via a language which is still being taught on condition that language support is provided (Graddol, 2006, p. 86). The CLIL may also prove useful to Emirati students in schools. In addition to the language, using English as medium in higher education poses another problem in the UAE mainly that the textbooks used usually cause 'context' difficulty for the students in that these textbooks are primarily American and English publications (Collins, 2010, p. 103).

Challenges of globalization and the global language are huge. In facing such challenges, the UAE is currently considered as housing the biggest 'education hub' of international branch university campuses globally (Wilkins, 2010). In addition to the three main federal government owned universities, there are 73 foreign higher education institutions licensed by the UAE Commission for Academic Accreditation (Mahani and Molki, 2011). Therefore, whether government owned or private, all these higher education bodies follow the same language policy, i.e. using English as medium of instruction. The UAE government policy is thus aiming to avoid 'brain drain' by providing foreign education within its own homeland to Emirati nationals (Naidoo, 2010).

The above discussion leads me to investigate some of the justifications behind government language policies to use English as medium in higher education in the UAE. Some of the reasons may be: The first obvious explanation is to prepare such students for the global market who are not only proficient in English but also to master internationally oriented-skills; Secondly having an international higher institution attracts not only local students but also international college undergraduates and graduates which may help in compensating for the decline of locals, i.e. its economic benefit (Byun, 2011, p. 431). Thirdly, EMI helps motivate the students to study English due to its world significance and international employment opportunities have become high (Jusuf, 2001, p.1423).

In the UAE two-thirds of the private higher institutions were established after 2005 (Wilkins, 2010, p. 394). Thus, I question whether enough assessments have been

undertaken since 2005 to evaluate the extent of success of this initiative, of this ‘language shift’. Simply put, the higher education hub concept still remains an unproven model in the UAE (Wilkins, 2010, p. 397). Pertinent to this argument Graddol (1997) rightly states that some of the consequences of English as a medium in higher education are that college graduates become ‘drivers of language shift’ because they quickly use English not only in academic environments but also in social communication (ibid., p.10). Such a language shift changes the pattern of the social ‘privilege’ and leads to social change (ibid., p. 38).

One question pertaining to this discussion that emerges is; If English is to be used in higher education and in social communication in the UAE, where and when will the Emiratis use, practice and enhance their national language, their Arabic. My fear is that over time, the Arabic language will only be used for religious purposes; while reading the Holy Koran and in mosques, while in all other daily communication, whether in academic or social settings, English will be used and will replace Arabic.

Besides academic literature, issues of how learning a language, in this case English, may demean the value of the indigenous language are widely debated in the local media in the UAE. How Arabic may be set aside by the learning of English in schools and higher education as portrayed in the press is discussed in the coming section. In addition to the participants in this study, several newspaper articles and interviews also confirmed that there was a belief that the status of Arabic is not what it should be and that remedial actions are needed. In the following section, statements by leading academics in interviews released in the press, and interviews with two senior curriculum designers who are also Arabic teachers in schools will be discussed. A concern was also voiced in the media interviews that a bilingual model of language education was necessary in schools and universities in the UAE.

In a newspaper report, the National Federal Council of the UAE (the parliament), its Education, Youth and Media Committee, debated the issue of the Arabic language in UAE and specifically requested that Arabic ‘must be the main language in the UAE education system’ (Salem, 2014). They confirmed that although there are policies in place to support the Arabic language, yet they requested legislation to make the policy

mandatory (ibid.). In addition, during a conference under the title ‘The Arabic Language is at Risk, its Protection is Everyone’s Responsibility’, one academic stated in a press interview that Arabic faces many challenges: globalization, the dominance of English, and an outdated Arabic school curriculum. She adds that protecting the Arabic language in UAE has become both a religious and national duty (Barakat, 2013).

On the same issue, an academic linguist announced in the press that he was shocked to observe that Emirati citizens do not converse in Arabic (Srinivasan, 2005). However, Emiratis do not speak or use their mother-tongue because they are not being given enough exposure to Arabic within the UAE (Pennington, 2015). We therefore are faced with a linguistic problem that is multifaceted and may be due to the misbalance and unique demographic nature of the UAE. Another education expert released a statement in the press that Arabic is at risk of becoming a second or third language in UAE. He also stated that Emiratis find it easier to speak English than Arabic and that English was ‘seducing’ the Emiratis (Pennington, 2015).

The issue and concern of the poor Arabic standards in UAE was also widely debated in press interviews and several diversified sets of causes were stated together with some significant remedial suggestions. It stated that as language is a standard bearer of identity, then gradual loss of Arabic in the UAE is a serious problem that is in need of immediate attention. The press article proposed that a bilingual model in schools and universities would bring back Arabic in the UAE. In addition to the widespread use of English, several other diversified set of causes were stipulated: the low quality of Arabic instruction; inadequate school resources; non-engaging teaching methodologies and under trained Arabic teachers to name but a few (National Editorial, 2014).

Confirming the importance of introducing a bilingual programme of education in the UAE, a linguistic scholar said that such a programme would allow Emiratis to have a sense of identity and engage in the UAE’s multicultural society while retaining their cultural and linguistic heritage (National Editorial, 2014). Introducing engaging and attractive methods to teach Arabic was also emphasised by an education expert who stressed the importance of making Arabic teaching/learning, especially in schools, more fun and of introducing topics of interest to children (Nadeem, 2015).

The above discussion clearly exemplifies the concern that Arabic is at risk in UAE and that many causes are behind this threat, and not only the widespread use of the English language as a lingua franca. They identified the main challenges to be due to lack of students' motivation due to unqualified Arabic teachers and old teaching methodologies that cannot compete with their modern counterparts in teaching languages like English or French. Another reason was that Arabic is not given due respect in universities where English is the medium of instruction.

As stated by the ruler of Dubai, and in order to address this issue, an institute for the Arabic Language was established in one of the three government universities so that 'The Arabic language should occupy top priority in the educational systems', and stressed the importance of 'restoring the prestige and grandeur that Arabic had enjoyed for many centuries'. He significantly linked the Arabic language to identity and said that the institute will reinforce the national, regional and Arab identity (Sherif, 2012).

Confirming the above point, another newspaper interview by one educational academic revealed that there is a strong perception that the Arabic language is losing dominance as a communication tool, especially among the young generation. He said that was because of the old methodologies in teaching Arabic that rely on memorization in schools. Emphasis is made that the danger lies in not using the language because usage makes the language alive (Sherif, 2012).

Moreover, and associating English to be one of the main causes of the current poor Arabic status, one academic expressed his view in a newspaper interview and said that because students are over-exposed to English with its bright vivid books and resources together with its stimulating methodologies, interest in Arabic may very well diminish. Agreeing with this view, another senior academic said that education administrators want to make all efforts so that students develop their English skills, but Arabic proficiency is suffering as a result (Pennington, 2015). A linguistic professor stated in a press release her fear that Arabic is losing the race of languages in the UAE. She voiced her concern that citizens of the UAE are unaware that Arabic is an 'asset' and not a 'liability' and are uninformed of the 'wholesale adoption' of English on their linguistic abilities. She also said that the role of Arabic is getting smaller by the day in social,

cultural, economic and political communication. She confirmed that Arabic monolinguals 'risk being stereotyped as uneducated' (Constantine & Al Lawadi, 2007).

Discussing bilingualism in general, a UNESCO report recognized that acquiring a language involves learning the culture that is articulated through that language (UNESCO, 2010). Another UNESCO report highlighted the importance of not allowing English to override Arabic in the UAE. The need to establish a national curriculum that would reflect aims and aspirations of the community, to manage Emirati's local environment and to promote national identity was emphasized (UNESCO, 2011).

In addition to newspaper interviews, the research settings including photographs I took and used as interview stimuli also shed light on this research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002; Holliday, 2002; Seale, 1998). I took photographs of posters, signs, banners, images used: e.g. Pictures depicting 'Arabic' or 'Western' culture, language choice. I aimed to identify which was the dominant language and why, in order to compare and contrast what was actually implied in the university's portrayed image. These images seen daily by my participants in their educational settings play a significant role in helping the researcher study the different realities under investigation and the effect of these realities (Rapley, 2007, p. 3).

This section has summarized some of the literature pertaining to English as a medium in higher education. It clearly showed that due to globalization, people and nations needed to have one language with which to communicate. The English language is now the lingua franca in many nations. UAE is no different. Emiratis and expatriates residing in the UAE and who opt to receive higher education, whether in private or public universities, must master English. In addition, media coverage and some pictures in the research settings also reveal language prioritization in the UAE.

In conclusion, literature reviewed in this last section indicates clearly that there is an ongoing debate pertaining to EMI in education in general and EMI in higher education in particular. Many drawbacks have been identified pertaining to probable linguistic and cultural identities' loss. The downfalls may be high in a country like the UAE where the Arabic language is already demeaned. On the other hand, several benefits have been

outlined. In addition to better meta-cognitive skills, proponents claim that due to globalization, English should be mastered because it is the gateway to economic, international knowledge and work prosperity. In an attempt to decrease the negative and increase the positive approaches of EMI, Jusuf (2003) proposes partial immersion pedagogy. This concept allows both students and teachers to use the mother tongue when English obstructs comprehension.

2.6 Summary and point of departure

In the first section (section 2.2) I discussed literature in relation to EIL. The literature suggested that relationships between social identity and language learning have become a major interest to several scholars in language education. Scholarly research reviewed typically examines how structural constraints and customary practices might position learners in a learning environment which does not enhance the language learning process. The literature suggests that EIL is now being applied in many nations using teaching material with a heavy ‘Western’ cultural load in terms of their content as they were originally made for English-speaking countries. However, this material is now being used by multilingual speakers (Alsagoff, 2012). The latter point was important to this research because within the context of UAE, EIL may need a shift from traditional forms of teaching and materials to reflect a more global and, to some extent, specific local representations of language usage and cultural interaction patterns in order to cater for different contexts.

Moreover, the literature suggested that when English is the first choice as a second language it always pushes other languages aside thus curtailing their usage (Pennycook, 1994, p. 14). In addition, the literature also suggested that when government language education encourages the teaching and learning of English, it is done at the expense of the students’ mother-tongue (Tollefson, 2013). Therefore, and within the context of this research, we should not consider English language education without considering Arabic language education. Moreover, and as shown in the literature, selecting a language in education means simultaneously discussing national identity (Graddol, 2006, p. 116).

In section 2.3, the idea of second language learner and second language identities was examined. The literature reviewed suggested that teaching English does involve racialization because of power relations which are the result of dissimilarities between teacher and student (Kubota & Lin, 2006). Therefore, and in order to secure an encouraging language learning environment, the literature suggested that TESOL educators should take this notion into consideration. Moreover, the association between identities construction and language learning, specifically in the context of EIL, was also emphasized in the literature.

In section 2.4, I discussed literature in relation to my theoretical framework and the social identity theory and explained how it informed my research. SIT was discussed at length and its relevancy as the theoretical framework for this research was explained. A central element of SIT as covered by the literature is that identity is changeable and constructed. Social identity emphasizes the importance of the social context in understanding what occurs in a certain community and constructing the different identities. More importantly, and relevant to this research, SIT defines how people perceive themselves within a group and their eagerness to portray positive identity in order to boost their self-esteem. This is associated with stereotyping and why people resort to it. This section also reviewed English and the discourses of cultural and linguistic imperialism and two main paradigms of culture: essentialism and non-essentialism,

In the final section, (section 2.5) I discussed English as a medium of instruction in education and the effect it might have on both the mother-tongue and local identities. The literature suggested using a language does not only entail mastering its syntax and morphology but more importantly it means assuming its culture and ‘supporting the weight of a civilization’ (Fanon, 1991, p. 18). In addition, EMI in higher education, specifically in the UAE was discussed in the literature. The literature suggested that because two-thirds of the private universities were established after 2005 (Wilkins, 2010, p. 394), evaluation of EMI remains an unproven model (ibid., 2010, p. 397). Literature also suggested that EMI in higher education results in college graduates becoming ‘drivers of language shift’ as they rapidly use English social communication

outside of academic environments (Graddol, 1997). English as a medium of instruction in education comprises a significant element in this research.

The aforementioned discussion highlights a number of factors. Literature indicates that English is becoming an international language and because of that it is used by different people for different purposes in different contexts. That usage is influenced by various socio cultural factors. As a result, English language pedagogy needs to take on board the specific socio cultural contexts. However, within the context of this research, language pedagogy is still strongly embedded in previous pedagogies that are specifically built on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English as a Second Language (ESL) notion rather than on EIL. As a result, it is still heavily built on materials that address themes and topics that are not culturally embedded in the UAE context. We should therefore investigate how the materials and pedagogies that are still embedded in native speakers cultures, might affect the Emirati students' identities. The present study therefore takes into consideration the important relationship between language and social identities, particularly in a context like UAE where a foreign language is introduced to students from the start of school, and where language materials and the pedagogies promoted by policy makers and implemented in classrooms still represent social realities that are germane to the English native speaking context. To understand what identity alterations have occurred and how they conceptualize their own identities, this study focuses on higher education students who may have undergone almost 16 years (between the first year of primary education and the first year of postgraduate education) of English language and EMI.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY & METHODS

3.1 Introduction to Chapter 3

This chapter will first restate the research question and establish the research approach. It will then provide the chosen framework and the selection of participants. The chapter continues with a discussion on the analytical procedures and with an outline of how computer software was used. This is followed by discussing the complexities and challenges faced in researching in a multilingual context and the research's ethics. The last sections provide a critique of quality criteria including credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, reliability, validity, reactivity and reflexivity, before finally identifying the researcher's subject position in relation to the subject matter.

This study set out to seek answers to the following research question:

R.Q How do Emirati students conceptualize the relationship between social identity and the English language?

3.2 Research Approach: Qualitative Interpretive

I chose thematic analysis because extra interpretation goes into the definition of codes and into applying the codes to chunks of interview transcripts. This method of analysis is mostly used in qualitative studies because of its ability to capture meaning in textual data sets. In addition, qualitative data is a non-numerical way of coding data such as transcripts (Nunan, 1992), and I also chose this method because of its ease and applicability. In addition, I found that thematic analysis paved the way to understand the potential of any topic more broadly (Marks and Yardley, 2004).

In terms of research strategy, the current study was an interpretive qualitative research because, as Lincoln and Denzin (1998, p.3) state, it involved a '...interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter'. I live in the UAE and all my participants are Emirati citizens. The choice of a research strategy, design, and method depends on the research question to which we seek answers and the main objectives that we set out to investigate (Nunan, 1992, p.71). This design choice also warrants the tools and methods

to be used for data collection and analysis (Carter & Little, 2007; Merriam, 2009). Merriam (ibid.) and Creswell (2007) explain that such a paradigm focuses on meaning in context and thus it becomes imperative that the tools used for data collection and analyses are perceptive to fundamental meanings.

I aimed to investigate the participants' point of view with hopes of getting as true a picture as possible of their interpretations (McNeill & Chapman, 2005). While quantitative researchers first aim to gather facts and then study whether a relationship exists between these facts, and subsequently produce quantified and generalizable results, a qualitative researcher aims at understanding peoples' perceptions and how they comprehend the world they live in (Bell, 2005). This is relevant to my study because I was investigating how Emirati students perceive their social identity after learning EIL, and I found that a qualitative approach would give me their true subjective impressions and beliefs.

While quantitative methodologies are inclined to be concerned with testing theories, qualitative approaches tend to generate theories. Putting it simply, qualitative paradigms inductively develop a pattern, a theory or a meaning (Creswell, 2007, p.21). At the outset of this research, I did not have a specific theory that needed analysis, but had hoped that in finding answers to my research question, certain categories, patterns, or theories may be produced. In addition, qualitative approaches often emphasize the manner in which individuals interpret their social world. This research is aimed at finding out how participants conceptualize the relationship between social identity and the English language. In addition, how participants of the research may infer certain attributes or actions related to their language learning and the effect of the 'Anglophone Western' culture on their ever changing social identities. I therefore found this paradigm to be most appropriate. Attitudes towards learning a second language and the motivation, among other factors, play an important role in achievements (Gardner, Tremblay and Masgoret, 2011). This method of enquiry will project a 'view of the social reality as a changing property made up by the individuals' creation' (Bryman, 2001, p. 20). This qualitative approach was found useful in deriving answers to the research question.

A qualitative approach tends to research individuals' experiences, beliefs and concepts as they are 'lived' or 'felt' or 'undergone' (Sherman & Webb, 2001). In addition, according to the SIT, individuals define themselves in relation to others and generally seek to differentiate their own group from others by positive characteristics (Tajfel, 1978). Therefore, by investigating my participants' perceptions of their shared concepts, I hoped to identify ways in which they exhibit their social identity. Moreover, a qualitative study produces theories through inductive research about social meaning. This research follows the inductive theory in that it has allowed theory to occur from my findings. I started with my research question, gathered and analyzed data and consequently theorized from my findings. Thus, I have moved from the general to the particular, as is usually the case in qualitative research, and as stated by King & Horrocks (2011). Furthermore, Jones & Gratton (2015) explain that a deductive approach is when a theory is already established before initiating the research, and a hypothesis is tested through the data collection and analysis. However, in an inductive method, a theory emerges from the data collection and analysis, and as such, it is frequently used to elucidate the research findings (Richards, 2003).

In addition, an interpretative qualitative paradigm emphasizes the examination of human lives from a cultural perspective: how people think, what they believe, and how they view themselves (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Denzin & Lincoln (1998) add a further dimension, stating that in qualitative research, the researcher's aim is to generate an in-depth explanation of participants and context. As Hackley (2003) explains, interpretive approaches present a method of investigating a subject in depth without a numerically secure generalization. This method was selected because it was my profound interest in understanding what exactly happens to the Emirati social identity when learning English, and I was confident that useful results might emerge. This methodology would help me comprehend the social world by analysing the participants' views, without aiming to change them but only to interpret their opinions and issues. I also hoped to understand their attitudes and values as I aimed to see the world through my participants' eyes. I sought to prioritize the voices of eight Emirati students at the Sorbonne University and two Senior Arabic Curriculum Designers at the Ministry of Education who were also

Arabic teachers. The main aim was to gain new insights from the personal sense-making of their experiences.

I concur with Merriam (2009) who states that the researchers' world view, their skills and personal traits have a bearing on the chosen method for the research. Moreover, and as Duff (2008, p. viii) adds several factors dictate the choice of the research method: It depends on the question being asked; it is a matter of personal preference to the researcher; and the already existing body of knowledge on the topic also has a bearing.

My choice for an interpretative qualitative paradigm was, in many ways, affected by the fact that in my previous work as a UNICEF Communications Officer, I had undertaken many interviews concerned with the lives of mothers and children in disadvantaged poor areas. I covered stories in many countries and in diverse social settings. My UN post took me to totally isolated, poor villages which lacked the basic necessities of health, hygiene, education, etc. Other times, I had to go to highly sophisticated government offices. My interviewees thus ranged from extremely poor families including children who suffered various illnesses due to lack of clean water, absence of education and extremely poor health services to government official stakeholders and decision-makers. During my UN career I acquired many skills that have taught me how to behave with my participants of this research. I have become more culturally sensitive and as a result can better handle and understand diverse cultures; I realize and appreciate differences more and have become a good listener. In short, my past UN experience has guided me to conduct my interviews in a sensitive/appropriate manner.

My research question needs to be answered in the context of a qualitative interpretive methodology because I need to look qualitatively into the social life of the participants. Because I am based in their particular setting I had the opportunity to collect rich data from this location. I started with the setting of a foreign university in the UAE and I explored further the culture, starting with the statements of the participants' lives. I was not interested in counting occurrences and it did not matter how many phenomena I experienced or how many statistics I reached because these are not relevant and will not help in answering my question any better. Moreover, I was not keen on controlling or reducing variables and I was not conducting an experiment. I wanted to enquire about

students' lives and I was not generalizing from the data I found (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, I believed that this study design would lead to substantive information resulting in sound knowledge derived from the perspectives of the participants themselves in a naturalistic setting (Nunan, 1992, p. 4).

In addition, I chose not to pursue a normative approach because when I started my research I did not know what was important in the lives of the participants, and I had not made any judgments. I was going to develop and modify my research instruments in the process of the research and my initial interview questions changed as I used them. My interest was always to receive answers to 'what', 'how' and 'why' and not 'how many' or 'how much'. Moreover, as I explained earlier I enhanced my skills of acquiring information through qualitative methods, mostly through interviews and observations during my 25 plus years of working for the United Nations.

As stated above, this research aimed to examine the culture of a small group of Emirati students to find out their views of 'how' and 'why' they engage and see the relationship between the social identities and the English language, including the Western culture. These students had been learning EIL in schools and in their first or second year of university education. I was interested in finding out how learning EIL has changed their world view and the way they think about themselves, i.e. how they view their social identities.

After discussing my justifications for choosing an interpretive qualitative approach to investigate my research question, the next section will detail my research setting and explain why I found this setting to be useful for my research.

3.3 Research Setting

This research took place during the academic year 2013/14. It was conducted at the Sorbonne University in Abu Dhabi, the UAE. This is a private French university yet all Masters Programmes are undertaken in English. The French Sorbonne University in Abu Dhabi, UAE is a private foreign university which provides an appropriate research setting, and that is directly connected to the research question in this study and addresses relevant issues (Holliday, 2007, p. 33). This setting is also relative to the research

question as Holliday (2007) emphasizes when he stated that qualitative research settings are a place for cultural learning. Furthermore, ‘culture’ is used within qualitative research as ‘an operational, heuristic device’ (ibid., p. 41). In other words, researchers must be cautious not to be distracted from focusing on the complex reality by being influenced by the ‘culture’ which they themselves create. The choice of the university is significant to the research question and is of a relevant setting and offers practical opportunities for gaining fruitful results. As discourse studies tend to create theory rather than test it, it is imperative to choose a site that could yield specific differences or similarities that may be related to particular theoretical paradigms (Phillips and Hardy, 2002).

The choice of the university from which to recruit participants was felt to be appropriate because English is the language of instruction of all subjects in a foreign university in the UAE. It is my opinion that Emirati English language students may have different views and attitudes towards English, thus I have chosen to investigate how this diversity affects students’ social identity through their choice of attending a foreign private university.

3.4 Participant Selection: Sampling and recruitment of participants

I administered interviews to eight participants to elucidate how they think and feel about EIL and the ‘Anglophone Western’ culture. I also interviewed two Emirati Arabic Curriculum Designers who were also Arabic teachers. My aim in interviewing the two Arabic designers was to elicit their perception of the Emirati students’ social identity and its link with the English language. The purpose of this study was to gain understanding of how learning EIL affects these students through their lived experiences and in what way it may have affected their social identities.

I evaluated the interview responses from a purposeful sampling of eight Emirati students in Abu Dhabi, the UAE, and two Arabic curriculum designers who are also Arabic teachers in schools. As Silverman (2010) explains, theoretical and purposive samplings are the same unless there is an absence of a theory behind the purposeful procedure. In this case study, I had selected a theoretical sampling because it is my belief that my chosen group of participants is relevant to the research questions and my theoretical position (Mason, 1996 in Silverman, 2010, p. 144). The issue of the appropriate number of participants in qualitative research ranges approximately between 15 to 25 participants

who are expected to provide thematic saturation (Gordon, 1992; Clayton 1997; and Creswell, 2009). I do acknowledge that I was only able to recruit eight participants for my study because I could not get access to more. I stopped interviewing participants when I found that no new information was being added and that answers were repetitive.

The purpose of the research was announced and explained through posters and banners in the university, and I requested volunteers to participate in the research. All announcements were written in Arabic and English and were placed in students' frequently visited areas like hallways, cafeteria, library, sports complex, etc. The signs called for volunteers to participate in the research and explained the research aims and questions. The signs also clarified that one to one interviews would be held and that interviews would be recorded and later transcribed. Moreover, it highlighted that participants' involvement would be on an anonymous basis, and that any data collected will only be used for the research. It was also emphasized that volunteers may opt to drop out of the research at any time and that there were no obligations on their part to continue with the data collection until the end (see appendix 1a Arabic and 1b English).

Volunteers were also informed that they would be active participants during the data collection (interviews) and analysis phase of the research. This was to ensure the accuracy of the recorded information. Once the data analysis was finalized, I shared my findings with the participants in order to confirm their answers and make sure that I have given a true picture of their responses. I also showed my gratitude for their involvement and expressed verbally and in writing my appreciation of their participation in the study.

The researcher's mini biography, contact details and picture were also posted (See appendix 1a for Arabic and 1b for English). Being an Arab myself, living and working in the UAE for almost thirteen years, ethically appropriate issues were not a concern while undertaking interviews and observations. I understand and am aware of the culturally acceptable behavior which facilitated building a bridge of respect and fostering a good rapport between me and the participants. I did not foresee any problems while communicating with the students because I am an Arab female who speaks the language of the participants. My long stay in the country has given me a good understanding of the Emirati cultural norms.

Participants

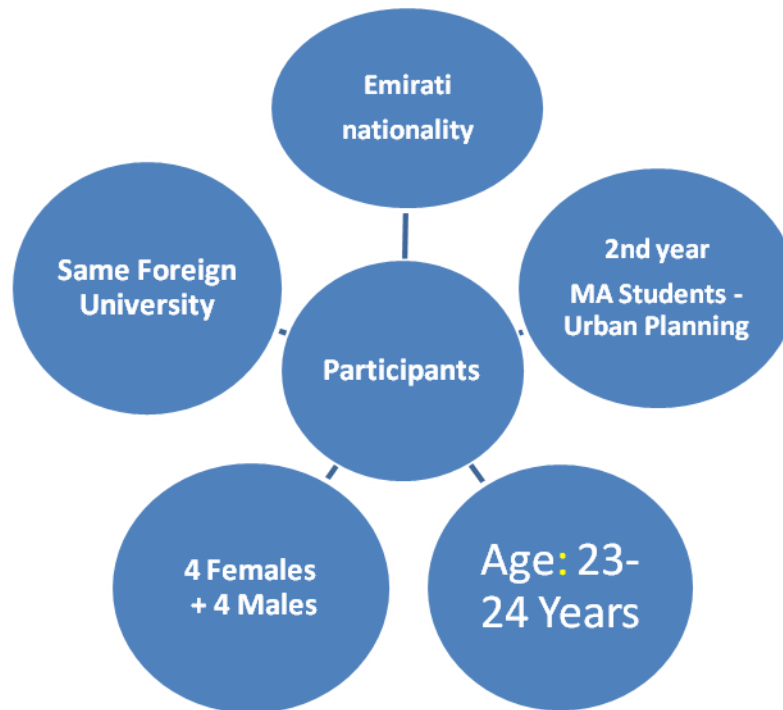


Figure # 1

My participants were carefully selected within certain parameters that I had set. My criteria were based primarily on having as many common features between my participants as possible. The four males and four females were all Emirati citizens and within the same age group. They were all in their second year of studying for a Master's in Urban Planning at the Sorbonne University in Abu Dhabi. They came from families that could afford to send them to a foreign university which entailed high tuition fees and thus meant high income families. This also might imply that they travelled a lot and were exposed to other cultures. All the latter factors were cautiously selected in order to ensure the consistency and coherence of the sample. I chose a purposeful sample rather than a randomly selected one in order to insure that data collected is relevant to my research question. I sought to find out how and in what way did learning EIL change their thinking, ways of seeing things, their personal experiences, and their thinking of who they are, i.e. their social identities.

In addition to the above eight participants, I also interviewed two Arabic curriculum designers. These two selected Arabic designers were also Emirati Arabic teachers and I aimed to gather their views of how Emirati students conceptualize the relation between social identity and the English language. Their views would give me a different perspective on the issue

The above section has detailed my sampling selection and gave explanations as to why I chose a purposeful sample supported by the literature review. It also detailed how my participants were recruited. The coming section will explain and discuss my research method, and clarify why I believed interviews would be the best tool to obtain answers to my research question.

3.5 Methods of Data collection

Data was primarily collected through interviews with eight Emirati students and two curriculum designers who were also Arabic teachers.

3.5.1 Interviews

As already explained above, this is essentially a qualitative study which makes use of qualitative methods of data collection and analyses. The method used to collect data for this study was semi-structured interviews. This interview based study focused on comprehending how people make sense of their experiences within a framework of negotiated, socially constructed identity.

I also took pictures of university logos, direction signs within the university and general public landscape pictures of street signs which acted as prompts during my second round of interviews. The amount of photographs I took and used as interview stimulus was heavily influenced by the amount of time I had. Moreover, I made a conscious choice of which photographs to take and took into consideration that some photographs may have been done in a way to deceive some government authorities or other parties (Bell, 2005). My choice of photographs was based on several criteria: as mentioned above, newspaper clippings that covered a variety of language education issues, and photographs obtained from the university setting such as pictures of billboards within the research setting. My

aim was to show my participants several photographs of objects they come in contact with during their daily presence in the university.

I conducted personally three rounds of in-depth interviews with the participants and sent out two online sets of interview questions by email. The first round was direct interview questions undertaken with the eight participants and four Senior Arabic Curriculum Designers. Three months later I needed to obtain more data through interviews, but this time using photographs as prompts. On this second round only four participants were available for interviewing using photographs as stimuli. The third round of interviews was done with the two Senior Arabic Curriculum Designers.

The two sets of interview questions sent out through emails were designed as follows: One for participants and the other for Senior Arabic Language Designers. Only five participants were available to respond to the online sets of questions. Three participants chose to answer questions regarding language preferences among their nuclear family, extended family, work colleagues, friends, neighbors, religious leaders, teachers and their local community. This is group 1 (reference Appendix 4). The other two participants, group 2 (reference Appendix 4) opted to answer language preferences in shopping contexts, visual and audio media, printed media, cinema/theater/concerts, work places, correspondences (Telephones – official communication), official communication, religious settings, information and communication technology. The interview questions sent via emails to the two Senior Arabic Curriculum Designers included questions regarding the connection between English and identity, the impact of English on the Arabic language and the future of English in the UAE (reference Appendix 2). I sent out via emails the set of interview questions to the two Senior Arabic Curriculum Designers because they were not available for one-to-one personal interviews when I started my data collection. A month later, they contacted me and I was able to conduct personal one-to-one interviews. For full interview transcripts with the two Senior Arabic Curriculum Designers refer to Appendix 3.

Participants were given an opportunity to choose the time and location of interviews to accommodate their preferences. Male participants were interviewed in a private location at the university, such as an empty classroom, during a time in the day when it would not

be disruptive to their learning. Female participants opted for outdoor places as a quiet corner in a restaurant or coffee shop. It is relevant here to point out that this researcher is an Arab Muslim female and the conservative nature of the Emirati culture would not find it quite suitable for a male and female to meet in public alone. This was acknowledged and respected by this researcher.

Semi-structured open-ended interview questions meant that time was spent in transcribing the data generated from the in-depth interviews. Interview transcripts ranged from 4 to 11 pages per participants. Data was transcribed verbatim from audio recordings. In a quest for accuracy, the process was time consuming. I realized that I could not be comprehensive no matter how hard I tried, and I cannot analyze data in all possible ways. As stated by Denscombe (2007), interviews, which are usually employed during a qualitative study, are a good technique when the researcher wants to understand individuals' experiences, emotions and opinions. I therefore, had reasonable assumptions that I would generate sound results through this methodology. Moreover, and as supported by Hackley (2003), interpretive approaches to research do not aim at a generalization of the study outcomes or of results and conclusions of data analysis. To a certain extent, they seek rich and perceptive descriptions of a certain issue or event in its social context. In addition, when carrying out semi-structured interviewing, the researcher designs a general structure before starting the interview only to set the general scene for the main questions while details are worked out during the interviewing. Interviewees enjoy a good amount of flexibility as to which question to respond to, how and in what manner (Drever, (1995).

All interviews were conducted in Arabic by the researcher, a native Arabic speaker, who holds a BA in Translation. All interviews were translated into English. In the interviews, I asked the participants to identify the ways in which English impacts on their Emirati social identity by responding to several open-ended questions. Complexities and challenges in researching in a multilingual context are dealt with in detail under section 3.2.

The following examples of questions were used to facilitate answering interview questions sent via emails with the two Senior Emirati Arabic Curriculum Designers:

1. 'How do you see the effect, if any, of the English language on the Emirati identity?'
2. 'Do you think the Emirati student may change some of his habits (his way of dress or food) after learning English?'

For more descriptive details, participants were prompted to recount narrative experiences such as, 'Tell me about a time when the English language impacted on your identity?'

The following examples of questions were used to facilitate dialogue at the in-depth semi-structured interviews with the eight Emirati participants:

1. 'When you learned English and as an Emirati and you have the Emirati culture, do you think your identity changed in any way after learning English?'
2. 'Tell me when you learned English did you take or get to know anything about the Western culture or is language something and culture is something else?'
3. 'How does the English language impact on your Emirati identity?'
4. 'How do your views on English language learning, and its use within the UAE, affect your learning of English and social identity?'

An interview is not a simple dialogue but rather a complex social process which is undertaken between two people, the participant and the researcher, and therefore can never be typical or replicated (Jones, 20004). Thus, and because of the interpersonal interaction, 'objective truth' cannot be obtained (ibid.) Moreover, review of the literature revealed that in a qualitative research, interviews are regarded as the 'joint production of accounts or versions of ... identities, knowledge, opinion' (Seale et al, 2004, p.16), as 'conversation with a purpose' (Burgess, 1984, p.102), as 'professional conversation' (Kvale, 1996, p. 5). Interviews do not view participants as controlled objects and data as external to the individuals (ibid.). In other words, both participants and interviewer construct knowledge during a qualitative interview of mutual interest (Kvale, 2009). This clearly indicates that the researcher too is responsible for the knowledge being created

during the interview to a certain extent.

Bryman (2001) explains in relation to semi-structured interviews that the researcher should organize an 'interview guide' where questions are listed. However, this does also imply that while undertaking interviews, the researcher should not necessarily abide by the interview questions already written down, but should also allow key words or themes mentioned by the participants to emerge because they may lead to other questions. This will allow for flexibility in following the talk of the participants and not being limited to the researcher's predetermined lines of questioning (Kvale, 2009).

However, the participants had the flexibility in the manner that answers are organized. One of many advantages of using interviews as a research tool is its great flexibility because of its wide applicability with various interview types that are suited to diverse situations (Punch, 2014, p. 152). The researcher may not follow the order of his/her list and may add questions based on participants answers, but all listed questions must be asked. I therefore found that semi-structured interviews are an appropriate paradigm for this particular research as the emphasis was on what the participants view as a significant topic in order to understand certain issues, events, patterns and forms of behaviour.

The relationship between the researcher and the participants entails a power imbalance as the interviewer has the authority to structure the interview and ask the questions. This is made more complicated due to some features such as age, gender, and social status. However, the participants have the right to withdraw from the interview if and when they desire. Therefore, the interviewer's aim was to establish a balanced rapport with their participants (King & Horrocks, 2010). Only in exceptional instances, Kvale (2010, p.15) argues, does the researcher aim to lessen the 'power asymmetry' by allowing both parties to ask, interpret and report during the interview.

In addition to power asymmetry, another important point related to interviewing is the means by which to record and register the interview. The researcher has the option of either taking notes during the interview or recording it, either audio or video. Each method has its pros and cons as stated by Blaxter, Hughes & Tight (2006), who also warn that if researchers decide to take notes during an interview and not use a tape recorder,

they may tend to lose focus during questioning, may not be able to use non-verbal communication, and will not have a verbatim recording. Moreover, if and when they stop putting pen to paper, it may wrongly signal that the interviewers talk is of no value. On the other hand, using an audio or video recorder also has its unhelpful side; mainly that the recorder may stop working, and also that recording generates an extremely time consuming process of transcribing as almost one hour of recording may take approximately 12 hours to transcribe written in almost 60 pages of draft form.

In this study, I decided to make use of a tape recorder so as to give my full attention to the interview questions and focus on the non-verbal communication of my participants. This also allowed me to give better prompts and follow-up questions. This decision was also backed up by my previous successful UNICEF experience when I video recorded, when possible, or used a tape recorder to record my interviews and write my stories. Moreover, non-verbal communication is highly important in an interview as warned by Wengraf (2004). The author draws attention to the expectation that the researchers' paralinguistics has to be in harmony with their verbal words because any mishap will send the wrong message to the participants and of equal importance is 'listening to the paralinguistics of yourself and your informant' (ibid., p. 198).

3.5.2 Photographs used as prompts for interview questions

Again in following the interview protocol, participants were requested to respond to photographic prompts with follow up questions. I took pictures of signs and billboards inside the universities. In addition, to investigate my participants' perception of their linguistic landscape in public places, I took pictures of public street signs. The aim was to examine my participants' views regarding all the latter pictures. It is worth noting here that I did not lead or give any hints to my participants when they examined the pictures. I was interested to see what their reactions were, what would attract them first to comment on, and what their interpretations were on viewing them. These photographic data were used as prompts during the second round of the interviewing process.

As I was interested to investigate the 'why' and 'how' of the research questions, interviewing and using photographs as stimuli seemed suitable because it is a technique

usually associated with qualitative data. Through this tool, I was able to gather data related to perceptions, attitudes and concepts which may not have been easy or suitable to be obtained through other methods. In addition, interviews provide an opportunity to observe the course through which participants project different concepts and views, and to understand how they socially construct and interpret certain notions, such as ‘social identity’, ‘national identity’ or ‘national culture’. I was interested in finding out how and in what way participants viewed the English language, how they may think it did, or did not, influence their beliefs and attitudes (Seidman, 2006). Whether they felt that while learning English, they were subjected to the ‘Western culture’, and in what way.

Moreover, interviews usually generate rich data in comparison, for example to questionnaire surveys, whereby participants tend to provide short and simple answers and no follow-up or probing on certain issues is feasible. In addition, interviews allow the elicitation of data through one-to-one encounters (Nunan, 1992, p. 231). I believe that questionnaires were inappropriate for this research because they are suitable for gathering a restricted amount of data from a large sample group, whereas interviews gain a wealth of data from a small sample group (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In addition, my belief is that during an interview, my dialogue with the participants may go deeper and probe into the participants’ line of thinking, views and perceptions regarding the topic under investigation.

As I needed to elicit my participants’ opinions and beliefs towards the topic, one-to-one semi-structured interviews seemed an appropriate methodology to be used. Although I had an interview guide, yet I did not strictly abide by it, and allowed some related themes or key words raised by the participants to flow. This allowed my subjects to have the flexibility in the manner that answers are organized. What they see as important and bring to the forefront of the interview and what topics seem to them as insignificant or unimportant (Bryman, 2001). This gave me the relevant information I was seeking because I needed to know how they interpreted certain issues and categorized events pertaining to the subject under investigation.

Alternatively, I had considered the use of survey questionnaires but their usage may not have proved appropriate for this particular type of study. Semi-structured interviews may

help to lead on to a certain level of trust and confidentiality between the researcher and the participants, thus yielding more spontaneous and candid views which, as pointed out by Brown (2001) may be absent in questionnaires. However, all listed questions had to be asked and all research question-related topics had to be covered (Kvale, 2007).

I found that semi-structured interviews were an appropriate method for this particular research because my study aimed at finding what my participants perceived were significant issues regarding the researched topic, which would allow me to understand some concerns, relevant events and particular forms of conduct. Thus, as King and Horrocks (2010) say, qualitative interviewing may disclose some data related to what participants' beliefs about reality and knowledge are, which was the main aim of my study. A qualitative interview gives participants the chance to explain and justify their behaviours and actions in their own words, thus allowing the researcher to find out, investigate and probe notions or concepts that might not arise during other types of data collection like observation (Bryman, 2008).

During interviewing, I intended to build a good rapport with participants in order to decrease any inhibitions they might have towards the research or me. This was achieved by having regular meetings with them, prior to the interviews and I explained clearly the concept behind the study and gave them as true a picture as possible of my background, my degrees and experiences and why I am interested in undertaking this research. It is my belief that in doing so, I built a relationship founded on respect, interest and attention (Seidman, 2006). To recap, interviews were found to be a practical tool to ask questions and create rich data.

The interview questions were divided into two sections: the first part aimed to find out the subjects' preferences in using either Arabic or English and in which context and why. The second part sought to elicit their behavioural beliefs: life style, cultural habits and traditions, and how they identify with their own language and culture. In addition, as a researcher, I intended to investigate the students' feelings about learning EIL, and how this may have any influence on their Emirati social identity. Because they were bilingual (English/Arabic), I left the participants to choose the language which they felt more

comfortable with in speaking. This choice was indicative and led to significant data. During the interviews, I monitored which language they spoke, and in what context and when they code-switched between Arabic and English. All interviews were recorded and transcribed.

The duration of in-depth interviews was 30-40 minutes. All interviews were audio-taped and transcribed, and detailed notes and descriptive memos were written. Interviews provided depth of data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002) because participants were encouraged to reflect, ponder, discuss and share their thoughts, beliefs and experiences. In-depth interviews allowed the research to enter the inner world of another person to gain comprehension from their perspective (Patton, 1990). Patton (1990) states that ‘purposive sampling’ has power and logic in selecting ‘information-rich’ participants (ibid., p. 169). Participants were selected for their involvement with both the Arabic and English languages. Arabic is their mother-tongue while English is learned as EIL, is the medium of instruction in higher education and is used in different contexts almost on a daily basis.

Participants were informed of the study via posters on the university announcement boards and through emails with attached consent forms for those interested in participating in the study. These were signed and given to the researcher by the eight interested participants. The announcements were written in both Arabic and English. Please see Appendix 1.a and 1.b for Arabic and English announcements respectively. At the beginning of each interview, I re-established the purpose of the study, outlined the desired research outputs and highlighted all confidentiality measures to safeguard participants’ personal information. In a quest for coverage and uniformity, an interview guide was designed and used to steer the conversation around aspects related to identity and the English language.

The interviews were recorded digitally with meanings clarified during the process. Data was secured in password protected file folders with access available only to the researcher. The data was coded as part of the iterative multifaceted and simultaneous process of data collection and interpretation (Creswell, 2003, p. 182). The emerging themes were analyzed, removed, added, or strengthened as the data analysis process

proceeded. During this process of meticulously analyzing the data, sub-codes emerged which substantiated the emergent themes, presenting relationships and/or contradictory evidence (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Asking questions at every step of the data analysis, as rightly stated by Corbin & Straus (ibid.), helps to develop probable answers and assists the researcher to comprehend the issue at hand from the participants' perspective.

Prior to starting my analysis, I did not have pre-defined themes but allowed the data to generate patterns. As I read through my entire data corpus several times prior to coding, ideas and concepts of likely patterns started to emerge. My main research question was how Emirati students conceptualize the relationship between social identity and the English language. I therefore needed a method of analysis that would explain and clarify my participants' realities, experiences, and meanings.

3.5.3 Observations

In addition to the main research method which was semi-structured interviews, there are circumstances where observation is also deemed necessary because each method has its weaknesses and strengthens and will generate several different types of data (Denscombe, 2007). In this research, I chose to use both methods, because I needed to find out some information on significant concepts related to my research question. Moreover, using more than one method allowed me to use triangulation; i.e. the combination of various methods which paved the way for the research topic to be investigated from several different perspectives (ibid.). My observation concentrated on campus observation, aided by the use of field notes. I intentionally did not go into classrooms, or teachers' staff rooms, but did a general campus observation. The main reason was because I was interested in capturing the embedded social context of the use of English on campus specifically and in the UAE in general. I needed to experience the study setting similar to my participants', and being a 'participant observant' allowed me to achieve this to an extent (Spradley, 1980).

Observation helps comprehend the surroundings of the participants and the context in which they study and spend much time, which was crucial in order for me to get a 'holistic perspective' of the environment which I investigated. Moreover, by doing an observational fieldwork, I saw for myself the true setting and did not rely on hear-say. In

addition, it allowed me to see things that could be overlooked by people who are routinely present in the setting (Alasuutari, 1998).

The following personal anecdotal observations are supported by the above interview transcripts. Malls in the UAE during week-ends are very busy places to capture a hugely diverse audience. Prior to explaining my personal observation experiences, it is relevant to note that although I am an Arab veiled Muslim woman, my features are that of a blonde ‘westerner’. Week-ends in the UAE are Friday and Saturday and so I made a visit to a mall on a Thursday night. It is interesting to note the language change of the Emiratis when they see me. When I approached the elevator, and while waiting, an Emirati family was also waiting. The family consisted of a father, mother and three children with two Filipino nannies. I heard the mother speaking Arabic to the children. As they were approaching the elevator and saw me, the mother switched her Arabic language and started speaking English to her children. She continued to speak English inside the elevator until we reached the garage. The children also had no problem code switching as they were fully conversant in both languages. I observed this behaviour wherever I went; in malls, at petrol stations, in shops, etc. The interesting issue with the code switching is that it occurred regardless of whether the speaker was a male, a female, young or old. Another interesting point is that the code switching was always from Arabic to English and never vice versa.

Although, as mentioned above, interviews were recorded, yet and as Biklen (1992) states, field notes help the researcher to register what the recorder fails to record, such as certain sights, impressions, and the general environment. Moreover, field notes can act as a personal log for the researcher in order to monitor the development of the project. I aimed to find out if there is a contrast in terms of the UAE government language policy regarding English and Arabic usage and the actual practice. I was interested in finding out the day-to-day use of the two languages in public domains and materials. Moreover the students’ actual language practices within the researched institution. Some of the things I looked for were: which language is mainly used for the university prospectus, signs, official university circulars, bill-board, door signs, notice board advertisements, etc. If the two languages (English and Arabic) are used, I intended to establish which

language came first, which had a bigger font size, and if only one language is used, what it is and in what context.

Observations and field notes are also used with the intention of analysing what the researcher sees or to make new assumptions by looking at things from various different angles. A researcher should be able to infer clues and have the power of deduction towards which observations are relevant to the research questions. Moreover, the theoretical framework and the research methods used have decided which observations lead to answers. Furthermore, omitting certain observations under the pretence that they are not relevant or do not relate to the research questions should not be made, and if they are, sufficient justifications should be given (Alasuutari, 1998).

In addition to field notes which were taken during and after interviews and observations, a fieldwork journal was also maintained. This was in the form of a diary where fears, breakthroughs, errors, ideas and experiences were recorded. By recording the latter, reflexivity was better reached because it helped me address these issues. Each entry was dated. This journal was extremely useful as it served as a significant source of data, when I started the writing up stage of the study (Spradley, 1980). Moreover, this collective approach of data gathering from different settings, may lead to the triangulation of the 'true' state of affairs by investigating when and where various data overlap. It may also advance reliability of a single method. However, attention should be given to the amount of time and resources needed for data collection and analysis which may put at risk the quality of analysis (Silverman, 2010).

This section has detailed my research design and the justifications for choosing interviews as my main method for data collection. In the coming section I will discuss my analytical framework and explain why I chose thematic analysis, and as it is a flexible approach to analyze themes in my rich data (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and lead to answering my research question.

3.6 Analytical Framework: Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is considered to be the basic foundation for qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis was selected as opposed to content analysis although

there is a great similarity between the two methods. Thematic analysis is defined as a tool for identifying, analyzing and reporting themes or patterns within data (ibid.). Moreover, thematic analysis focuses more on the qualitative feature of the analyzed material (Marks & Yeardley, 2004). I did thematic analysis of interview scripts with a sample of eight Emirati students' (males and females) and two curriculum designers, who were also Arabic teachers. The focus was to describe the effect of EIL learning on their social identities and how they managed it. I fully acknowledge that my chosen sample of eight participants and two Arabic curriculum designers is not a representative sample.

Procedures for coding themes or coding from data may seem similar between grounded theory and thematic analysis, yet differences exist (Braun & Clarke, 2006). While thematic analysis data is determined prior the beginning of the research, grounded theory analysis data is undecided before the initiation of the study (Ibrahim, 2012). Consequently, I identified themes and applied and linked them to raw data as summary markers for later analysis. Such analyses included comparing code frequencies, identifying code co-occurrence, and displaying relationships between codes within the data set. As previously mentioned, I chose thematic analysis as numerous qualitative analyses are types of thematic analysis because my main aim was to depict themes of meaning (Langdrige, 2004). In thematic analysis, reliability is of greater concern than with content analysis, because more interpretation goes into defining the codes as well as applying the codes to chunks of text.

Despite some issues related to reliability, thematic analysis, the most commonly used analysis in qualitative data research, is valuable in capturing the complexities of meaning within a textual data set. In addition, thematic analysis was selected for its ease and applicability. I found thematic analysis the most appropriate for my study because it seeks to discover themes using interpretations. It provides a systematic element to data analysis. It allows me the researcher to associate an analysis of the frequency of a theme with one of the whole content. This will confer accuracy and intricacy and enhance the whole meaning of the research. Qualitative research requires understanding and collecting diverse aspects and data.

Thematic Analysis gives an opportunity to understand the potential of any issue more widely (Marks and Yardley, 2004). The three basic systems for undergoing thematic analysis are mainly:

- (1) Reading through the interview transcripts, defining descriptive codes then replicating the process throughout all transcripts
- (2) Grouping together descriptive codes, interpreting meaning in relation to research question
- (3) Finally, generating themes (King & Horrocks, 2010).

In the above section, I have described thematic analysis as my chosen framework and I have justified my reasons for this choice that was supported by the literature review. In the next section I will give a detailed description of my analytical procedures: (a) Data coding and (b) Using NVivo software in assisting in data analysis. First, I will explain the coding system I used for easy referencing to my interview transcripts (see Appendix 3, 4, 5a and 5.b).

3.7(a) Analytical Procedures: Data Coding

The following table details the six appendices to this research:

APPENDICES CONTENT

Appendix 1.a	Sign for Volunteers Wanted with Researcher's mini biography in Arabic
Appendix 1.b	Sign for Volunteers Wanted with Researcher's mini biography in English
Appendix 2	Online questions sent to two Arabic Senior Curriculum Designers in Arabic
Appendix 3	Interview transcripts of the two Arabic Senior Curriculum Designers in English
Appendix 4	Online questions regarding Language Choice in Different Domains in English
Appendix 5.a	Interview transcripts with the eight participants
Appendix 5.b	Interview transcripts with four participants using Photographs as prompts
Appendix 6	NVivosoftware code sheets

The Interview transcripts have been coded as follows:

1. Interview Transcripts with the two Senior Arabic Curriculum Designers, (Appendix 3)

ACD 1 = Arabic Curriculum Designer #1

ACD1, Answer 1 = ACD1/1

IQ1 = Interviewer question 1

2. Online set of questions regarding language preferences in different language domains: Ptp1 = Participant 1 - LD1 = Language Domain Answer 1

3. Interview Transcripts with 8 participants (Appendix 5.a)

- a. Interviewer = Int.
- b. Interviewer Question 1 = Int.1
- c. Participant 1 = Ptp.1
- d. Participant 1, Answer to question 1 = Ptp1/1

4. Interview Transcripts with 4 participants using photographs as prompts (Appendix 5.b)

- a. Interviewer = Int.
- b. Interviewer Question 1 = Int.1/p
- c. Participant 1 = Ptp.1/p
- d. Participant 1, Answer to question 1 = Ptp1/p1

3.7 (b) Analytical Procedures: Using NVivo Software (Appendix 6)

In my analysis, a process was followed which included a number of phases from the initial transcription phase to the final writing of the report. First I transcribed and translated my interviews transcripts verbatim. The language choice of the interviews was left entirely up to the participants. I explained that I was a balanced bilingual and that they were free to talk in which ever language they felt more comfortable. I took notes when my participants chose to speak Arabic or English or both. I noticed that the interviews always started in Arabic but as they got more comfortable they code switched. English words, phrases and sometimes sentences were used not only as fillers but sometimes because the Arabic word was not ready. My mother tongue is Arabic and I hold a Bachelor degree in Translation so I was comfortable undertaking this chore.

Although I do admit that I did face several challenges in researching in a multilingual context, which will be dealt with in detail in section 3.7. I personally transcribed the interviews which helped me to get acquainted with the data and ensured consistency.

After certain patterns emerged, (e.g., Arabic language and Islam and English language teaching and the Emirati culture), I inserted these as keywords into NVivo (see Appendix 6, e.g. Arabic and Islam and Impact of English in the UAE). The software which was an aiding tool, then grouped the data under these keywords. Then, within each grouped data, I looked for data that either supported or negated the main idea for each keyword. I also compared participants' perspectives internally, (i.e. looking out for consistencies and conflicting views by the same participants) and externally, (i.e. looking out for consistencies and conflicting views between the participants). Some paradoxes emerged which entailed that my participants were not sure of their attitudes, perceptions or beliefs, probably because they were socially constructed (see Appendix 6).

This section has explained how I made use of the NVivo computer software as a tool in helping me to analyse data after I grouped themes that emerged from the interview transcripts. These themes possibly crystallized after reviewing all the interview transcripts several times. In the coming section, I will address some of the issues around the pros and cons related to the complexities and challenges to researching in a multilingual context and the complications if any, caused by the loss of meanings during translation, and how I addressed these challenges. I do acknowledge the challenges faced in this process.

3.8 Complexities and Challenges of Researching in a Multilingual Context

Interviews are not merely a 'pure' representation of participants' world view but rather have a dialogic nature with data gathered being a result of a process of dialogue (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). As a qualitative researcher undertaking research multilingually, three issues had to be taken into consideration: Firstly, while converting data from one language to another, the researcher must have accuracy and proficiency in both languages; Secondly, meaning making and representing must involve negotiation with

the participants; Thirdly, to be able to situate the stories in their proper social context one needs knowledge of the context (Bashiruddin, 2013). These three issues will be dealt with in the coming discussion.

3.8.1 Converting data from one language to another

I collected data, which were mainly interview transcripts, in both Arabic and English. I chose to speak Arabic because the Arabic language was the mother tongue of both the researcher and all participants. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim to an extent. Writing across languages did pose a challenge for me as I conducted the interview in Arabic, while my participants spoke Arabic with some code switching for certain words or phrases. However, the final reporting of this research was done in English. I do acknowledge that writing and reading across languages did pose a challenge for me in this research (Magyari & Robinson-Pant, 2011).

Although it was an extremely time consuming assignment, I chose to do the translation and the transcribing process myself because of two main reasons. Firstly, I hold a BA in Translation and secondly, I have done similar translation and transcription work during working for UNICEF and recording interviews. I therefore had the accuracy and proficiency of both Arabic and English, which I considered as an advantage.

I did not feel comfortable hiring and relying on an outsider to undertake the assignment. I feared that literal translation would not do justice to the transcripts and consequently to the data, and that more than mere literal translation was involved. As the literature reviewed indicates that interpreters in a research are active members of the research process (Holmes, Fay, Andrews and Attia, 2013), I considered myself lucky to have undertaken both the role of the interpreter and the researcher because when the researcher's knowledge of the participants' language is limited, the representation of findings may be affected (Pavlenko, 2005). Conducting these two roles did bring several advantages to the research. Being bilingual myself, I was able to mediate between several linguistic words, it brought several opportunities for deeper understanding, and led to better understanding of ethical sensitivity because of the nature of this research (Shkларov, 2007).

I allowed my participants to choose the language they felt most comfortable and confident with and most of their answers were given in Arabic. I do acknowledge that translating the data was not as easy as I predicted. Although as previously mentioned, I was faced with some challenges which I had to acknowledge and address during the data collection, and during converting it from one language to another. Another significant point I do acknowledge is that my dual role as interpreter and researcher did double my workload, especially as I opted to give as full translations as possible. Moreover, the lack of relevant (in this case Arabic) data analysis software does limit research progress (Halai, 2007).

There is a vast linguistic difference between Arabic and English such as word order, and I made every effort during translation and transliteration not to lose the meaning and at the same time stay as close as possible to the participant's actual words. As I realized while data collection that I would need to transcribe and translate my interviews, I made several side notes during interviewing. If my participants spoke Arabic I would write a brief gist of what was being said in English. These small sentences or phrases, written in either English or Arabic, proved very useful during the translation process. I also felt content with this approach because I would give the essence of the dialogue at the instance it was said. Another important issue was that while speaking Arabic, speakers tend to repeat several times either words or ideas. I had to eliminate some repetitions which I judged would not have bearing on the meaning. While other times I did transcribe the repetitions because I knew they were made to emphasize or strengthen a word or an idea.

I made conscious informed decisions in the above mentioned process based on my good knowledge of the two languages. The process of translation and the translated text can vary and there is no single right translation (Overing 1987; Simon, 1996). However, during writing my transcripts and the translation process I did aim to abide as much as possible by the correct English grammar that is accepted in academia and that is not considered to be rambling. To make sure I did translate what participants said and meant, I went back to them several times just to clarify and confirm their dialogues. It was important for me to accurately state their beliefs and values as given by them. However, I

do acknowledge that sometimes, and because of the power relation between myself and the participants, they would take my translation as accurate without reflecting on the words or sentences. After discussing some of the challenges I faced during data collection bilingually and how I addressed them, I will now move on to meaning making in the coming section.

3.8.2 Meaning making and representation

Adopting an interpretive approach in this research helped ‘reveal meanings that lie behind every day social action’ (McNeill & Chapman, 2005: p. 183). Meaning making was initially a core concern of mine during interviews. I was aware that as my participants spoke Arabic, their interviews would be translated into English. To make sure I understood accurately their point of view, I attempted this in several ways. After listening to their answer I repeatedly would ask “how does that make you feel?” or “What do you think of that?” Often their answers would not be ready because they had not reflected on the issue before. My questions made them think and better understand their own perceptions, which I believe were sometimes an eye opener for them.

I have taken an interpretive approach because the interpretivism theory states that we must first examine social interaction and specifically the interpretations of individuals in order to comprehend social life that people associate with their behaviour (McNeill & Chapman, 2005). I do recognize that meaning making and representation were not easy tasks. The challenge of representing my participants’ thoughts, beliefs, values and world view in English when they were expressed in Arabic, demanded that I try many ways. During the interviews, I always attempted to better understand their concepts, and elucidate exactly what they meant by using prompts and posing clarifying questions. However, I did so without interrupting them so that their train of thought while explaining a concern or important issue would be completed. As I was interpreting my participants’ views and concepts, my past experience in UNICEF as an interpreter during documentary making came into good use while I constructed the meanings of their dialogues. This past experience also involved translating and interpreting from Arabic to English.

Not only was I aware of what my participants said but how they said it, such as gestures, emotions and the different tones. For example, when I asked my participants what it meant to be Emirati, they often said ‘pride’ and used the slogan ‘we are Zayed’s children’. These words were originally said in Arabic and in the translation and representation process I did not only translate the words in English but also added in English who Zayed was and that he was considered as the father of all Emiratis and the founder of the UAE. This brought pride to my participants. Moreover, I made this addition because I did realize some people probably may not know who Zayed was. I was satisfied that the translation and interpretation was almost accurate because the meaning was communicated through the viewpoint of my participants.

3.8.3 Situating the stories in their social context

Although I am an Arab Muslim like all my participants, I am not Emirati. It was a concern of mine to be able to represent my participants’ thoughts and world view within their own social context, and I was careful that I would not affect the representations. I did share some cultural and Islamic values with my participants which facilitated building a good rapport between us and made my understanding of their perceptions easier. A problem did arise when I embarked on translating issues of socio-cultural-religious concerns. The Arabic language is very closely related to the Islamic religion and thus native Muslim Arabic speakers often use words such as Allah (God), or Insha Allah (If God willing) or similar words and phrases. I did make a decision to literally translate such words repetitively although I do acknowledge that in English and specifically in the world of Academia it might not be a norm. I aimed at constructing as true an image as possible of participants’ world view and how they interpret meaning of their social context, a context which I did not fully share, as despite living in the UAE like them, I am not an Emirati.

In the above section, I have shared many pitfalls and benefits of researching in a bilingual context and the challenges and complexities that I faced. In the coming section I will discuss the research ethics observed in this research.

3.9 Research Ethics

I read The Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research issued by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2004) and signed the relevant form. I read and implemented the ethical requirements that were appropriate to my specific research. The ‘Voluntary Informed Consent’: prior to starting my research, during an initial meeting with the participants, I explained in details in a one-to-one meeting the aim of the research, the general research questions and encouraged questions from the volunteers. They later signed a Consent form, written in both Arabic and English, in which they agreed to voluntarily participate in the research. I also explained clearly the process in which they are to be engaged and clarified why they have been specifically chosen. It was also explained how the research findings would be used and by whom.

The ‘Right to Withdraw’: I made it clear to my participants that they have the full right to withdraw from the research at any time without giving justifications. The ‘Privacy’ element: it was clearly stated to all participants that measures will be put in place to safeguard the identity of all volunteers and their locations: Names, contact information, etc. will be anonymous. It also specified that all collected data will be kept in a safe and confidential place, under lock and key, in my study room at home. Finally, ‘Publication’: I have read and understood the Good Practice in Educational Research Writing.

Prior to beginning the research, I held meetings with the university chancellor in which a detailed explanation was given regarding the research aims and questions. The university obtained consent on my behalf from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research to undertake the study. These procedures are necessary to initiate research with students in educational settings in the UAE. Having a positive rapport with the university chancellor paved the way towards obtaining consent. The chancellor was interested and showed enthusiasm for the subject of my research, and thus provided helpful assistance in the initiation of the research.

The above section has given a rundown of the ethical consideration put into place for this research. The coming section will deal with quality criteria in research especially significant for a qualitative interpretive study such as this research. I will discuss the importance of having quality criteria in my research including credibility, transferability,

dependability and conformability, which is important in an interpretive qualitative study such as this research project. This will be followed by discussing reliability and validity and reactivity and reflexivity and their significance in a research as covered in the literature. I will subsequently clarify the difference between an Emic and an Etic approach to a research project, and show my position within the study.

3.10 Quality Criteria in research

The following section will aim to discuss the various quality criteria that a qualitative research should achieve. Lincoln and Guba (1985) elucidate four essential quality criteria referred to as trustworthiness: credibility; transferability; dependability and confirmability. Simply put, trustworthiness means what measurements should be put in place to verify the quality, value and validity of the research. Within the qualitative research design, these four evaluation items will be discussed in the following section. In addition, validity and reliability, reactivity and reflexivity will also be covered.

3.10.1 Credibility

In addressing credibility, researchers aim to show that a ‘true’ genuine representation of the participants’ point of view has been attained (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In other words, credibility means that the research did achieve what it actually set out to accomplish (Shenton, 2004). Credibility could be termed ‘truth’ (Silverman, 2010, Seale, 1998, Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). Therefore, credibility entails that the data collected, analyzed and the results achieved, the researchers should prove that they have precisely registered the phenomenon which is being investigated. According to Lincoln and Guba (ibid.), guaranteeing credibility is one of the main elements in achieving trustworthiness.

3.10.2 Transferability

Transferability entails the extent to which the research main ideas can be applied outside the context that was carried out (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability or generalizability is quite restricted because the merit of qualitative research that focuses on ‘questions of meaning and interpretation’ is its uniqueness (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 394). Because the results of a qualitative research usually depend on a small number of participants in a specific context, I do concur with the latter authors in stating that

replicability would be quite difficult. However, I do believe that to allow transferability to a certain extent, the researcher should provide as much detail as possible regarding the context, in order to enable another researcher to determine whether his context is similar. In addition, the researcher is responsible for offering the transparency of methods and of analysis which is another way to achieve transferability.

3.10.3 Dependability

To achieve dependability or reliability is again another challenge in a qualitative piece of research, because it is quite impossible that the same phenomena are interpreted in exactly the same way (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The best a researcher can do is to facilitate another researcher to repeat the research. This may be achieved by recording the data and having peer checking for consistency of interpretation. Dependability can also be attained through triangulation, through reaching the same results with alternative methods or data.

3.10.4 Confirmability

Finally, the fourth quality criteria referred to by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as trustworthiness is conformability. Conformability means that researchers should give evidence that results have emerged from the data and did not rely on personal preconceived perceptions. This may be achieved by allowing others to check the work and the specific details, the transparency of methods, and by providing diagrams and illustrations and data appendices.

3.10.5 Validity and Reliability

The Literature reviewed indicates that there are many definitions given to validity and reliability, and some qualitative researchers have developed their personal notions of validity. They have often produced what they believe to be more suitable terms within the qualitative paradigm. The concept of validity in qualitative research, which is against the positivist notion, is better replaced by ‘authenticity’ (Maxwell, 2007), and along the same lines, validity could be termed ‘truth’ (Silverman, 2010, Seale, 1998, Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). Validity or ‘truth’ is the examination of how true the results of a

qualitative research are, and of the extent to which the social phenomenon emerging is an accurate representation of the account to which it refers (Hamersley & Atkinson, 1983).

However the notion of ‘truth’ is debatable. Randall & Phoenix (2009) argue that during a qualitative interview, participants may intentionally lie and not give the researchers ‘the whole truth’ in answer to their probes either to protect themselves or to put the interviewer off. I find their argument not quite convincing, as they do not offer persuasive empirical evidence to support their claim. In other words, validity places significant importance on the accounts and inferences that participants give to data, and not solely on the data or the method. On the other hand, reliability is the extent to which we obtain the same answers from participants every time they are asked (Seale, 1998). Means of addressing validity and reliability and how they relate may illustrate the different concepts by some qualitative researchers.

Seale, (1998) endorses the view of ‘dependability’ with the concept of ‘consistency’ or reliability in qualitative research. Reliability is a necessary but not a sufficient prerequisite for validity, while validity could be a sufficient but not necessary condition for reliability (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, Seal, 1998). Therefore, and because there can be no validity without reliability, evidence of validity is enough to establish reliability. Simply put, reliability is a result or outcome of validity during a given research project. Validity and reliability have now become common notions in both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. The concept of validity is defined by a variety of terms in qualitative research, and there exists not a single or common explanation. Some qualitative researchers contend the notion that the term validity is not pertinent to qualitative research, yet have realized the necessity of some kind of qualifying measure for a qualitative study (Richards, 2009). Reliability simply put means the degree to which results might be similar when the research methods are undertaken in the same conditions and at the same location. Validity refers to how close the instrument used in the research measures what it set out to measure. This study investigated how the Emirati students feel towards the English language and what the implications of their attitudes on their social identities were.

I therefore found that the semi-structured interviews and my using pictures as stimuli during the interviews led to the answers. Asking the Emirati students semi-structured questions, having the chance to probe further when need arose, did lead to heavy, in depth and rich data. Therefore, my instruments did validate the methods I chose. Another validation process may be accomplished by piloting the questions or asking colleagues whether the questions will actually assess the information requested (Bell, 2005). Richards (2009) adds that triangulation may also aid in validating the study.

However, not all measures of validity are considered plausible by many qualitative researchers. Hammersley & Atkinson (1983), Maxwell (2007) and Richards (2009), caution that qualitative researchers should not adopt a positivist agenda. For positivists, an important characteristic of scientific theories is that they can be tested, measured and may be forged or established with certainty. To achieve this, physical control over variables should be maintained, for example as in experiments. The concept of measuring means to comprehend, for example an educational concern by undertaking a process termed 'measurement' by the researcher on the physical world (Crocker & Algina, 1986). In other words, measurement can be understood as statistically relevant and deals with objective hard data and numbers. In qualitative research, such control over variables cannot be secured.

Objectivity is another problem area when we come to identify validity in qualitative studies, because qualitative researchers are part of the world they research and complete objectivity is almost impossible to achieve, also because both the researcher and participants' points of view are equally significant to the research (Maxwell, 2007). Moreover, Hammersley & Atkinson (1983) assert that validity could be tested when data is not taken at 'face value' but considered as an area of inferences that may generate hypothetical patterns. Within the context of this study, data generated from my semi-structured interviews and observations were not taken at face-value. I did not take the apparent merits of the data once it was given but carefully reflected on them and used them as points of interpretation that created patterns.

As mentioned earlier, to ensure reliability in qualitative research, examination of trustworthiness is crucial. How true the findings of qualitative research are is an essential

concept in discussing reliability and validity. However, threats to validity and reliability cannot be completely removed, but by giving significant attention to both during the entire research process, these threats may be minimized (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

After defining the notions and concepts of reliability and validity and how they are examined in qualitative research, I will now identify several different means of maximizing the validity and thus the reliability of a qualitative piece of research.

Reliability and validity of this study was achieved through triangulation. This was done to examine and improve the validity and reliability of research or the evaluation and assessment of findings by combining methods. This can mean looking at methods in several different ways (method triangulation) or different results (data triangulation) in order to obtain a 'true' picture on a certain given situation or circumstances. The belief by some social researchers is that viewing things from more and different angles, allows them to obtain an improved 'fix' on it, thus meaning they will be able to acquire better and more knowledge and understanding of the issue at hand (Silverman, 2010, Denscombe, 2007).

Most qualitative studies do not attempt to inquire about shallow descriptions but rather probe for a deeper understanding of the real world, and are undertaken in naturalistic settings where the researcher has no control or predetermined 'course established' and does not try to manipulate the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002). Multiple methods of data collection and analysis - triangulation - are needed to achieve reliability and validity since we are investigating multiple and different realities and need to register the construction of that reality.

During my research, I employed open ended semi-structured interviews, and analyzed media coverage pertaining to the issue under investigation, which I believe gave better validity and reliability to the varied construction of realities. Triangulation therefore had involved asking peer researchers who have professional knowledge of the researched area to evaluate whether the interview questions indicate the concepts researched (face validity). Moreover, I compared results with established indicators of relevant concepts

(criterion validity) and finally, I assessed my measurement and saw whether they tallied with theory expectations (construct validity) (Seale, 1998). However, Silverman (2010) challenges the idea of using multiple methods because, as he states, they may be too time and resource consuming and there might be a risk while comparing data from different sources in order to get to the 'true' picture.

3.10.6 Reactivity

In addition to participant triangulation which increased the validity and reliability of the research, reactivity and reflexivity are also important issues that deserve due attention and will be discussed below.

As a researcher, I should always bear in mind that my interview participants may modify their responses as they become part of the study, i.e. they may not be expressing the same attitudes and beliefs after the study has been completed. Thus, due caution must be given to reactivity (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Participants may alter their behaviours and answers based on their reaction to my presence. They may give responses which do not actually reflect their beliefs just to impress me or direct the flow of the interview. Participants may give me what they think I want to hear. Therefore, my presence may affect the way participants understand the issue under investigation and respond to it. My substantial experience hopefully helped overcome this problem in that my long stay in the field may have created a friendly environment and thus may have lessened the impact of 'reactivity' over time (de Laine, 2000).

My interviews were undertaken during a relatively long period of time. I took appointments with my participants at irregular intervals chosen by them, and I met them one at a time. During the meetings, I made sure that it was a relaxed setting of their choice. The interviews were recorded, but prior to opening the recorder, I made sure to 'break the ice' by talking about general subjects, such as the weather, the traffic, etc. When I was sure that my participant was relaxed I took permission to start recording and started my semi-structured interviews. In addition, I gave my participants pauses in order to lessen reactivity and the influence of the 'observer's paradox' (Labov, 1972).

Labov (1972) first coined the term ‘observer’s paradox’. He rightly states that linguistic researchers need to observe how individuals talk freely when not being observed; however, we need to ‘systematically observe’ (p. 209) participants in order to obtain rich data. Giving participants pauses did not only lessen the ‘observer’s paradox’ but I also noticed that it gave a good chance for both researcher and participants to rest and to reflect on both questions and answers respectively. I believe I was conducting my interviews in as naturally occurring contexts as possible, and even though, as Labov (ibid.) admits, we cannot totally overcome this paradox, I lessened its impact. One more important issue relevant to this discussion is that I realized that the effect of my recording on the participants was greater at the beginning of the interviews and lessened with time (Labov, ibid., Milroy, 1980). I became aware that the longer the interview lasted the more relaxed my participants were and I believe they sometimes forgot the presence of the tape recorder.

3.10.7 Reflexivity

In addition to reactivity, and equally significant, it is important that I manage any bias that may arise towards the topic under investigation. It is crucial that any of my presumptions towards the issue should not interfere with this study in general, and specifically during data collection and interpretation. This was an ongoing process, but I strove for objectivity during the entire study, although total objectivity is almost impossible to achieve. Holloway (1997) warns researchers that they may be over familiar with the settings they are investigating, and thus may not realize significant concerns or issues due to their over familiarity with the settings under investigations. To be able to overcome this, she advises that qualitative researchers should not take anything for granted and should act like ‘naïve observers’ (ibid., p. 7).

This is significantly relevant to my study because I am familiar with the Emirati culture, due to my living in the UAE, and know university environments because of my teaching experiences. However, I always aimed not to take anything for granted and tried to look at things from a fresh perspective in order to learn from the participants their views and ideas regarding the topic being researched.

In addition, reflexivity may be understood as the way researchers think, behave and make the most of their attendance inside the research setting in a ‘methodical way’ (Holliday, 2007, p.138). Furthermore, in qualitative research, researchers should not ‘start out with too many preconceptions’ (Bryman, 2001, p.324). Holliday (2007) also explains reflexivity as the manner in which the researcher understands and takes advantages of the ‘complexities of their presence within the research setting, in a methodical way’ (ibid., p.138). I did hypothesize that reflexivity was a problem while undertaking my research. At every stage of the study, I looked back and reflected on how I may have influenced the process during data collection and analysis. I attempted to view the real-life context in as a subjective manner as possible. In addition, and during observation, I also kept an open mind, and regularly controlled and bracketed my presuppositions so that my personal views did not tarnish my research.

3.10.8 The Researcher’s subject position: Emic vs. Etic perspective

From the above discussion, it becomes clear that subjectivity is a challenge that must be realized and addressed in order to reach a valid outcome of a qualitative research. Relevant to subjectivity are the perspectives of emic and etic approaches, which I will review next.

Literature reveals many different meanings of the approaches. The Oxford English dictionary defines ‘emic’ ‘studying or describing a particular language or culture in terms of its internal elements and their functioning rather than in terms of any existing external scheme’. This definition is often contrasted with ‘etic’, which is conceptualized by the OED as ‘studying or describing a particular language or culture in a way that is general, non-structural, and objective in its perspective’.

Literature reveals that the emic/etic definition is not simple, but varies according to the discipline. Some authors refer to emic vs. etic as private vs. public, or subjective knowledge vs. scientific knowledge, or as specific vs. universal, or as verbal vs. nonverbal. While medical professions may define the two terms as ‘cultural/within’ vs. ‘orthodox/without’, the educational field sometimes refers to them as ‘soft facts’ vs. ‘hard facts’. Whatever the definition is, the emic/etic distinction could be one of the basic

triggers to comprehend modern anthropology. In other words, it may be helpful in exploring the ways in which we understand and construe other cultures (Headland, 1990).

As I am an Arab Muslim who has been living and teaching in the UAE for the past fourteen years, I believe I may have a very good understanding of the Emirati culture, and I may be considered as an ‘insider’ in the researched context. This could have had a two-fold implication: while I carried out this study from a somewhat ‘emic’ perspective, some Emirati participants may not fully concur with me as such because I am not an Emirati citizen. However, I am an Arab Muslim who speaks Arabic and has extensive knowledge of their culture. Therefore I may have much in common with the Emiratis, yet I am not one of them. On the other hand, my personal features, which are very unfamiliar with an Arabic look and could be considered Western, may trigger some feeling of uneasiness and participants may, at first sight, treat me as an ‘etic’ researcher.

3.11 Summary of Chapter 3

This interpretive, qualitative, mainly interview based study was to investigate how the Emirati students conceptualize the relationship between social identity and the English language. The purpose of this chapter has been to give in full detail the research that was done and to explain the rationale and critique of the research approach followed. I have also shown, with references to the literature review, that my instruments for investigating this research were most appropriate to obtain in depth rich data. My analytical framework was explained, and I provided the rationale for opting to follow a thematic analysis which was also supported by literature.

As I needed to understand my participants’ beliefs regarding their view on the relationship between English and the social identity, a qualitative, interpretive approach seemed relevant to obtain and comprehend their world view after learning English. Interviews helped me to delve into their concepts, ideas and beliefs and thus to obtain as true a picture as possible to their conceived association between English and their social identity. Moreover, using a thematic data analysis approach helped to classify my participants’ conceptualizations into themes which facilitated a deeper understanding of their interview answers and responses. In addition, as the aim of this study was to

understand Emirati students, a purposeful selection of participants seemed most appropriate to achieve my research aim and was relevant to my methodological framework.

The role of the NVivo software as a tool in the thematic analysis was detailed. Moreover, this chapter also discussed at length many complexities in researching in multilingual contexts and how I addressed these challenges. In the latter section I also discussed and justified the choices I made in collecting, translating and analysing data in English and Arabic. This included why I chose to take on the dual role of both interpreter and researcher. I included some of the main issues around the complications, the pros and cons and the possibility of loss of meaning through translation and how I addressed them.

Finally, this chapter has thoroughly discussed and critiqued various quality criteria taken into consideration in this research project. These being: credibility; transferability; dependability; confirmability; reliability and validity, to ensure that my methodology and methods did result in the findings it set out to investigate. Another criterion was reactivity, which entails that my participants, due to my questions, may reply in manners which they believe would satisfy my personal interests in the research. In this regard, the Labov (1972) 'observers' paradox' was explained and how I lessened this effect to the extent that was possible, also acknowledging, with Labov (*ibid.*), that we cannot completely annul reactivity. The Ethical issues in this research were then covered with reference to the BERA's ethical guidelines for educational research. Finally the 'emic' vs. 'etic' position of the researcher was clarified and discussed. All above elements helped me in addressing the aims of research and assisted in conducting a robust and illuminative project.

In Chapter 4, I will give and discuss my interview transcripts, and provide the data analysis of my findings.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis & Findings

Chapter 4: Data analysis - Language use in the UAE

4.1 Introduction to Chapter 4

As explained in the previous chapter, in section 3.3.3, I used thematic analysis because it was the most appropriate to my specific study where I collected data in the form of participants' thoughts and ideas and translated them into text.

This interview based study attempted to answer the following main research question:

RQ1: How do Emirati students conceptualize the relationship between social identity and the English language?

This research question guided my interpretation of the data and served as a reference point throughout the process of analysis.

Three main themes emerged from my data analysis of the interviews I personally conducted with participants of this study, and from interviews with education experts and academic professors released in the UAE press. These themes will be discussed in this chapter.

The first theme was concerned with the Arabic language and its association with Islam. Within this theme, I was able to identify three sub-themes: The Status of Arabic in the UAE; Arabic and the Emirati Identity, and the fear of Arabic being displaced by the English language.

4.2 Theme 1: Language use in the UAE

As mentioned in Chapter 1 of this research project, the UAE is an Arab Muslim country and the Arabic language is declared by its constitution to be the language of the nation (Al Baik, 2008). However, due to its unique demographic imbalance, only one out of seven people is an Emirati national (Galal, Agence France-Presse, 2009). As mentioned in Chapter 1, the UAE Demographics' 2008 stated that only 19% of its inhabitants are

Emirati nationals, while 23% are Arabs and Iranians, nearly 50% are South Asians and finally 8% constitute other expatriates (Musabih, 2008). Thus, the majority of the population are non-Arabic speakers. In addition, and because the UAE is a rapidly growing young nation, and due to globalization, its nationals need to learn English not only to handle day-to-day activities but also for economic, educational, health and international growth.

The first of the major themes identified by my analysis was the Arabic language and its association with Islam. This included the sub-themes of the Status of Arabic in the UAE, Arabic and the Emirati identity and finally, the fear of Arabic being displaced by English.

4.2.1 The Arabic language and its association with Islam

I begin my analysis by looking first at themes that came out from the data in relation to the identities as Emirati Arabs and the connection between identities as Arabs and Islam. This is important in understanding how English affects the identities of the Arab Emirati. It was necessary to explore how students related to how their Arabic identity, which is linked to Islam, is being affected by a new identity which is developed from English. I wanted to find out from the data how students related their Arabic identity to their religion so that we can better see how English affects this already established natural relationship.

Data analysis indicated a strong sense of believing that the Arabic language is directly linked to Islam and that the Koran is safeguarding it. There was a general consensus amongst the participants that Arabic and Islam cannot be separated and that it goes without saying that every practicing Muslim should master the Arabic language. The notion was that the faith is not complete without its accompanying language. This fear is exemplified in the following section.

Several participants emphasized the significance of the Arabic language, its close association with Islam, and the recital, reading and understanding of the Holy Koran. For example, participant 1 said that the only time she spoke Arabic is when she was praying and she asked for forgiveness from God for not using Arabic elsewhere (Ptp/49

and Ptp/50) (see appendix 5a). In addition, she asked for pardon from God for not speaking Arabic except when praying. This feeling of guilt towards God for not using Arabic and asking for ‘pardon’ is a strong indication that she felt it was a sin. This transgression was so strong that she prayed for forgiveness.

The same participant also stated that when she spoke the Arabic language she was speaking the ‘Language of the Holy Koran’ (Ppt/52) (see appendix 5a). Participant two also made a strong link between the Arabic language and the Koran. She thanked God because Arabic is her language and that she reads the Koran and ‘we always look and ponder on the Holy Book’ (Ptp/8) (see appendix 5a). Similarly, participant seven said that ‘Arabic is the language of the Koran’ (Ptp/6) (see appendix 5a). Participant eight said that she should master Arabic because it is the language of the Koran but she does not and has a stronger knowledge of English, which makes her ashamed (Ptp/6) (see appendix 5a).

Significantly, participant four made the connection between the Arabic language and Islam by saying that ‘they [decision-makers and academics who are responsible for education in general in the UAE and language education in particular] should develop the Arabic language and Islamic education to make it more attractive to the children’ (Ptp/16) (see appendix 5a).

In Chapter 2, section 2.4, under Theoretical Framework and The Social Identity Theory, language is viewed by people as a symbol of social identity and as a social construct (Kramsch, 1998, Byram, 2002). I interpret my participants’ association between the Arabic language and Islam as reflecting their identification with Islam; i.e. the discourse of Islamic identity. This conceptual link, I believe, goes back to the connection between the Arabic language and the construct of Islamic Arabic civilization; that is to say it does not exist as an objective reality but rather as a social construct (ibid.) In this respect, there is a common belief that singles out classical Arabic as being the most accurate and beautiful of languages, a statement that is inseparable from the reality that Arabic has been used in the most important texts of Islamic civilization (Haeri, 1996). Their religious heritage, I believe, may have led the participants in this study to

emphasize the strong association with the notion of unity of the Arab-Islamic community.

My interpretation of the above statements of my participants may show that my participants felt shameful and sinful for their lack of using their own mother tongue. This shame, I believe, stems from their perception that they are not taking any steps to amend what they perceive as wrongful doings. The paradox comes when they feel that Arabic is under threat and that they fear for its existence. However, they are sure that the Koran will maintain it and never allow the Arabic language to be endangered. Participant two mentioned that she has the Arabic language ‘inside her’, i.e. built-in. She said while speaking about the Arabic language ‘whatever happens, this is our language. Thank God, we read the Koran and pray. We contemplate while reading the Koran; naturally. The Arabic language springs from inside us’ (Ptp/88) (see appendix 5a).

After careful review of the above statements, I attempted to understand the participants’ religious and linguistic identities and the roles played by the Arabic language in these identities as exemplified in their accounts.

These data may suggest that these participants perceive their mother tongue to be the language of Islam and thus only use it while praying. Therefore, they do recognize Arabic as a liturgical language which was cultivated for religious reasons. In addition, all the above statements of my participants indicate that they have great pride in and are strongly attached to the Arabic language, because it ensures the preservation of the sacred Koran and vice versa. I interpret the justification given by my participants as an explanation for the absence of their Arabic proficiency. As mentioned in Chapter 2, section 2.4, under Theoretical Framework and SIT, being born in a specific language community does not guarantee proficiency in that language (Block, 2007, p. 40). Therefore, possibly, my participants may not yet have reached a sound level of stability of the construction of their religious and linguistic identities. However, the association between Arabic and Islam is validated by Chejne (1969), who explains that the Arabic language as a whole came to be encompassed by the doctrine of the heavenly nature of the Koran with its choice of words, significance, and its particular details.

In summary, the above showed that my participants significantly pointed out that Arabic would not be endangered because of its association with the Holy Koran. Thus claiming that they felt contented with their linguistic identity. Conversely, my participants also confirmed that they felt guilty for not using Arabic frequently. As I stated in my literature review, Chapter 2, Al Sharhan (2009) states that Arabic is considered “... the language of God ... as the vehicle that conveyed the divine message to the Prophet” (p.3).

As discussed in the above section, 4.2.1, on how the new identity introduced by English may impact on the Emirati Arab identity which is closely linked to their already existing and well established religious Islamic identity, in the coming section I will discuss three other sub-themes that emerged under the main theme Arabic and Islam: The status of Arabic in the UAE, Arabic and the Emirati Identity and Arabic being set aside by English in the UAE.

4.2.2 The Status of Arabic in the UAE

Although the UAE is an Arab Muslim country, yet Arabic is not widely used due to the demographic imbalance of the nation, i.e. having much more non-Arabic speaking expatriates than Arabic speakers. The status of the Arabic language in the UAE was one of the main themes that emerged during the data analysis. Many issues were raised through the data analysis of participants’ interviews, and by using pictures that exemplified the issue of Arabic and its positioning within the nation as prompts during interviews.

My eight participants were dissatisfied with the current position of Arabic in their country, and three gave examples of other countries that strongly hold onto their mother tongue. Their disappointment with the position of Arabic is exemplified in their interviews. Participant seven mentioned Japan, Malaysia or Thailand as examples of nations who maintain and have pride in their indigenous language. He explained that the nationals of these countries speak only their mother tongue, although most of them know English. He described that in these countries English is only taught in schools but in restaurants and in their daily living, they speak their mother tongue. He added that

when he travels to Japan he is forced to pick up a few words of Japanese to communicate or use pictures but they would never ‘change their language for a tourist’ (Ptp/20) (see appendix 5a). Participant six expressed his concern about having too many non-Arabic speaking expatriates living in the country. He gave examples of daily encounters where he finds foreigners everywhere and thus is forced to speak English: ‘in cinemas we find foreigners; we go to the hospital I find foreigners, I go to the market I find foreigners, I go to the grocery I find foreigners. So where do we speak the Arabic language... ride with a taxi you must speak English’ (reference Ptp/4) (see appendix 5a). The participant said that ‘the day we can do that in my country, hold onto our language and make tourists learn it, that is the day when we can say we are safeguarding our Arabic language.’

Participant one said ‘speaking English in my country makes them annoyed and sad’ (reference Ptp/63) (see appendix 5a). She also believed that the Arabic language will grow weaker by time and expressed concern that her 14 year old sister’s school grades are in the nineties for English and are in the sixties for Arabic. In addition, she repeatedly asked her sister ‘is our mother American or British? Why? Why?’ and sadly asked ‘... just imagine her [sister] children, who will be the new generations and the next and the next. One feels that Arabic will be totally deleted from them’ (reference P/59) (see appendix 5a). Giving another example, she confessed that in her work place she had a situation where she was requested to write in Arabic and scolded herself saying ‘Is this me who could not write one sentence in Arabic now?’ (reference P/87) (see appendix 5a).

All the above quotes made by the participants clearly indicate that they felt unhappy about the position and linguistic ranking of Arabic in their country. These quotes significantly support the above participants’ beliefs. They also expressed sorrow and shame of their own Arabic literacy level, and their perception gave a rather depressing picture of how they construed and felt towards the status of Arabic. The participants’ perception was that the current Arabic status within the UAE was very poor and will get much worse, even to the extent of being ‘deleted’ in the future as expressed by participant two (reference Ptp/75) (see appendix 5a). Participants agreed that once they

go to a non-Arabic speaking country they should speak English but not in their own homeland. This again clearly demonstrates that they are not like many other countries that do not set aside their own language for the sake of English, tourism, foreign visitors or living expatriates.

This section has shown how participants' statements clearly indicate their view of the status of the Arabic language in the UAE, and their dissatisfaction with this status and their poor proficiency of their own language. In the coming section I will demonstrate how they perceived the future of Arabic in their country and whether they were satisfied or not with where their mother tongue is heading.

Most of my participants do not see their Arabic language flourishing or taking centre stage in their linguistic life in the future in the UAE. This fact is making them feel unhappy and dissatisfied. Participant two, when asked about the future of Arabic, said 'Arabic will be totally deleted' (reference P/75) (see appendix 5a). Participant two also said 'I feel it is vanishing' (reference P/79) (see appendix 5a), and participant four said 'Arabic language is destroyed' (reference P/5) (see appendix 5a). While participant two said '... we are all abandoning the Arabic language' (reference P/52) (see appendix 5a), and the same participant said '... it is impossible to make one sentence at all in Arabic ... this is very big ... it makes me angry' (reference P/87) (see appendix 5a). It is noteworthy here to mention that as a researcher, I totally realize that my participants may change their answers to my questions because of 'reactivity'. As mentioned in my methodology Chapter 3, due consideration was given to the effect of my presence and to the mere fact that I was asking questions may have a bearing on their responses. However, and as de Laine (2000) suggests, my extended stay with my participants may have lessened the impact of 'reactivity'. In summary, the above answers demonstrate that the majority of participants perceive that the Arabic language is fading away because English is taking over.

It can be said that the above statements reflect my participants' perception that Arabic is not given the respect it deserves and thus will vanish. This is also corroborated in several items of interview data. Although speaking in Arabic, it is worth noting here that I was very meticulous in translating the exact words used by my participants, especially

while talking of their notion of the future of Arabic in the UAE. Using strong verbs such as 'deleted' (reference Ptp/75) (see appendix 5a), 'vanishing' (reference P/79) (see appendix 5a), 'destroyed' (reference Ptp/5) (see appendix 5a), and 'abandoning' (reference Ptp/52) (see appendix 5a), clearly reveals to me that they are in no doubt of the inexistence of Arabic in the future in the UAE. This is contrary to the notions that the same participant expressed when speaking of the association of the Arabic language and Islam as clarified above.

During the interviews, and when asking one of the Senior Arabic Curriculum designers about the current status of the Arabic language in the UAE, he gave an interesting analogy about it and said '... Arabic is like a very sick person pitied by his family. As if his family is silently whispering he is not well and alive with us nor is he dead and we got rid of him' (ACD2/8) (see appendix 3). It is possible therefore to conclude that, after careful analysis, there is a similar perception that the status of Arabic is actually not where it should be.

After discussing the status of Arabic within the UAE as viewed by my participants during the interviews, I will now consider data relating to the issue of Arabic and Emirati identity.

4.2.3 Arabic and the Emirati Identity

There was a close connection between the Arabic language and the Emirati identity as revealed through the data analysis of my participants' interview responses. The analysis demonstrated that there is a prevailing belief that the Arabic language is part and parcel of the Emirati identity and vice versa. Sometimes during interviews, Arabic and the Emirati identity were used interchangeably. Thus, if and when one element is weakened the other is affected. The following analysis will support this conviction.

As previously mentioned, I did two rounds of interviews, the first round was with the eight participants using open ended questions, and the second round was made with only four participations using photographs as prompts. The reason for having only four participants was the absence of the other four from the country.

I will start with a picture I used as a prompt during my interviews. I intentionally downloaded the picture from the Sorbonne university website, knowing it would raise much discussion. The picture depicts three Emirati females, wearing the traditional Emirati dress, forming a band and playing on western musical instruments. Based on my own knowledge of the Emirati society, even if they were playing Arabic songs or music, it still would be seen as most inappropriate and would not be acceptable. However, when the French university placed this picture on their website, could they have appropriated the identities/images of these three Emirati girls to use for their own marketing purposes? Or maybe these girls are being exploited without them knowing?



All four of my participants expressed anger, shame and disgrace when they saw the picture. There was a consensus of how inappropriate the picture was. Participant one said it was against their culture and their national dress must be respected (reference Ptp/p14) (see appendix 5b). She also stated that these are foreign traditions and against their culture (reference Ptp/p13) (see appendix5b). From her disbelief, participant two asked whether this was a photo shop composed picture (reference Ptp/p12) (see appendix5b). She stated that it was a shame and that nationals should never wear their traditional dress when they imitate foreigners (reference Ptp/p13) (see appendix 5b). She also repeated what the latter participant said, that it is not part of their culture or society

(reference Ptp/p13) (see appendix5b). Finally, she commented that because they are Zayed's Children, they must respect their traditional dress, their culture and their heritage (reference Ptp/p14) (see appendix 5b). It is worth mentioning here that President Zayed was the first president of the UAE and the founder of the nation.

Participant three recalled that when the picture was going around Twitter people strongly contested it (reference Ptp/p11) (see appendix 5b). On a follow-up question, I asked what it represents. She stated how the picture degrades their traditional costume and does not do justice to their roots; their traditions and culture (reference Ptp/p13) (see appendix 5b). She added that their national dress is dear to them and should be respected (reference Ptp/p12) (see appendix 5b). Finally, she commented that the girls are playing western music and not Arabic music because of the musical instruments they are using and that this is fine abroad but not in the UAE (reference Ptp/p14) (see appendix5b). The fourth participant agreed with the other three and said that the picture was a disgrace and shameful (reference Ptp/p10) (see appendix 5b). She added that their traditional dress is part of their identity, heritage and roots. She stated that they take pride in being Emiratis, in being 'Zayed's children' and will remain so until death. She expressed how alien this is to their society and also commented that they were playing western music (reference Ptp/p11) (see appendix5b). She explained all the musical instruments used in the picture are usually used to play western music like the electric guitar, bass and drums and not to play Arabic music.

When being interviewed, one participant expressed concern when discussing the effect of globalization on the Emirati identity. She stated what is needed and essential to the Emiratis is to maintain their national identity with an 'international brain, a way of thinking' (reference Ptp/p.12) (see appendix 5b). The participant concluded her point by saying 'unfortunately, because we are a minority, some of us are drawn to the West, and they think of themselves as foreigners. They are taken by the tide' (reference Ptp/p12) (see appendix 5b).

In addition, on a question on how English is affecting the Emirati identity, the Senior Arabic curriculum designer stated that if the Emirati student would learn English without the acquisition of its culture, then there would be no harm done to the Emirati

identity. However, he added, if the Emirati student is completely immersed in the English culture that would result in negative impacts because it would violate the values and heritage of the UAE (reference ACD1/3) (see appendix 3).

My interpretation of the above is based on the fact that my Emirati participants have great pride in being Emiratis. They strongly hold onto their language and culture and consider part of this culture the outer manifestations of it, which besides other elements, is their traditional attire. They experienced a form of ‘invasion’ of their roots and heritage when seeing the picture and forcefully expressed their shame, anger, and disgrace. All my participants began their reading of the picture by drawing on the mode of dress and the ‘Western’ appearance that these females represented by being in a band and playing western music. The four participants unanimously rejected the picture, again I believe, because they interpreted it as another violation of their cultural identity to which they hold onto very intimately. As I stated in my literature review, Chapter 2, section 2.4, identities are constructed through language and language helps to transfer our entrenched cultural principles (Phan Le Ha, 2008, p. 25).

4.2.4 The fear of Arabic being displaced by English

There was a general view that Arabic was being pushed aside by English and that English was the ‘culprit’ behind the status of Arabic in the UAE. The widespread use of the English language for communication in everyday life, in the media, in school and university education, may have led to this belief.

The following section will reveal and confirm through my data analysis different views of whether English is the main cause of the deteriorating status of Arabic in the UAE according to my interview transcripts with and without using photographs as prompts. I took a photograph of a sign in the Sorbonne university cafeteria about keeping a healthy and safe environment. The picture had text, image and colour but all my four participants harshly remarked about the text and the language used. The text was first in French then in English.

Participant number one remarked ‘they do not respect us’ (reference Ptp/p8) (see appendix 5b). I probed her to clarify her meaning and her response was that they are ‘in

my country, on my land, they must respect my country, respect my language and respect my religion' (reference Ptp/p9) (see appendix 5b). After recognizing and acknowledging that it is a foreign university, her perspective was that Arabic should have been included out of respect to the nation (reference Ptp/p10) (see appendix 5b).

My second participant, when viewing the same picture, was very angry and said that 'this is becoming too much...' (reference Ptp/p2) (see appendix 5b) and indicated the lack of Arabic on the sign. She interpreted the French and English only as a sign that they are 'intentionally ignoring the Arabic language' (reference Ptp/p3) (see appendix 5b) and that it is a form of 'stereotype'. She believed that they [the university] come over to the UAE to teach them French or English and make them forget their mother-tongue, Arabic (reference Ptp/p4) (see appendix 5b). My third participant's first impression was 'where is the Arabic?' then she remarked it was fine because all the students here read both French and English (reference Ptp/p3) (see appendix 5b).

I took another picture of the fire exit of the cafeteria door of the same university. It contained eight stickers in different shapes, languages and colours. Again, the four participants were not happy with the picture, and although this one also contained text, image and colour, all four remarked on the text and the language choice.



My first participant reiterated her view all along, that she believes the university ‘degrades’ them. Remarking on the eight stickers on the fire alarm door, she said that having Arabic written in such small font, in comparison to the English and at the bottom was not ‘right’ and not ‘fair’. Probing her last remark she explained that Arabic should be first in big or equal fonts with English and French (reference Ptp/p3) (see appendix 5b). Participant two, when viewing the picture spontaneously remarked and asked angrily ‘where is Arabic?’ (reference Ptp/p3) (see appendix 5b). She repeated that it is a form of ‘stereotype’ and she gave significance to any sign but, as she interpreted it, they ‘ignored Arabic intentionally’ (reference Ptp/p3) (see appendix 5b). She added that if and when they do decide to include Arabic, it is given little importance, size and location wise (reference Ptp/p3) (see appendix 5b).

Participant number three also commented on the number of stickers saying there were too many stickers to warn and draw attention to a fire exit. Unlike the other three participants, her perception was that having so many stickers implies that the university thinks they are ‘stupid’ or ‘retarded’ to need all these signs. On probing further, she remarked that all students have enough education to understand a fire exit (reference Ptp/p3) (see appendix 5b). When asked why she felt that way she commented that foreigners only act like this when they are in her country and that she visited universities abroad and they have one sign to indicate a fire exit (reference Ptp/p4) (see appendix 5b).

Remarking on the same picture of the fire exit, participant number four repeated her claims that she has been trying to prove since we started the interviews, that their Arabic language and Emirati culture is intentionally being ignored. In an attempt to prove her interpretation she pointed out that out of eight stickers on the fire exit, only one was in Arabic and written in small font and placed at the end. She added that even in case of a fire breakout, they [the university] still insist on not putting Arabic where it belongs and that is at the top. Finally she said that ‘all the foreigners do this intentionally’ and that the Emiratis should stop them (reference Ptp/p3) (see appendix 5b).

In addition to the above analysis when using photographs as prompts in my second round of interviews, and as stated in my literature review, Chapter 2, interviews with

academics released in the press, there seems to be a general consensus that English is viewed as one of the reasons for the poor Arabic standards in the UAE. Moreover, learning English was also perceived to give Emiratis a different way of thinking and apparently changes their view of the world which could jeopardize their Islamic values and goes against their cultural beliefs.

When interviewed about his view of Emiratis learning English, the Senior Arabic curriculum designer number two replied sarcastically, that it was a ‘necessary evil’ (reference ACD2/1) (see appendix 3). Confirming that it was essential, the second Senior Arabic curriculum designer viewed English as a must, and as an international language which represents prosperity. He added that the English language guarantees many economic and social gains and benefits (ACD1/1) (see appendix 3). The same designer added that English is very important because all higher education degrees are done in English and up-to-date theories in science, mathematics and ideologies are in English. Finally, on the significant advantages of English, the same designer concluded that parents send their children to learn English because of the market demand (reference ACD1/4) (see appendix 3).

However, and putting Arabic before English, one academic stated that although English is a necessity it should not be at the expense of the Arabic language (reference ACD2/4) (see appendix 3). Moreover, and associating English to be one of the main causes of the current poor status of Arabic, Senior Arabic curriculum designer number one expressed his view that because students are over-exposed to English with its bright vivid books and resources together with its stimulating methodologies, interest in Arabic may very well diminish (reference ACD1/4) (see appendix 3).

Agreeing with this view, the other senior academic designer said that although the government is trying very hard to make Emiratis speak Arabic, yet the biggest challenge is that the Emirati students lack the environment to practice their own mother-tongue in their daily life (ACD1/5) (see appendix 3). The relationship between Arabic and English in the UAE was again verified by the same individual by saying that the role of Arabic is getting smaller by the day in social, cultural, economic and political communication. He confirmed a statement that was made earlier by one of my Emirati student

participants that Arabic monolinguals ‘risk being stereotyped as uneducated’ (reference Ptp/30) (see appendix 5a).

The above data seems to imply that Arabic is perceived as being set aside by the English language and that it may have damaging effects on the Arabic language and identity. This is emphasized especially significantly where English is used as a medium of instruction in higher education. As stated in my literature review, Chapter 2, section 2.3, Naidoo (2001) states that English poses a threat to the Arabic language and the Arabic identity. In addition, Tamtam, Gallagher, Olabi and Naher (2012, p. 1419) state that using English as a medium of instruction can have a ‘detrimental effect’ on the mother tongue of countries who implement this language policy.

In an attempt to investigate the perceptions of the Senior Arabic language curriculum designers as to whether they believed learning English by Emiratis had any effect, one of them replied affirmatively explaining that language affects the way you think, so consequently when you acquire a new language you acquire a new perception of looking at things, people and events, and new lines of thinking, because ‘language is a tool of thought’ (reference ACD1/10) (see appendix 3). Along the same lines, one linguistic scholar in a 2007 press interview warns that ‘The dominance of English has reached the extent that if someone does not know it they don’t have a future and are considered illiterate’ (Constantine & Al Lawati, 2007, Gulf news) (see appendix 6). She also confirmed that the English language is significant because it is our means of communication to the outside, but under no circumstances should it supersede Arabic. She also stated that we should regard Arabic as an ‘asset’ and not a ‘liability’ (Constantine & Al Lawati, Gulf news) (see appendix 6).

In another interview with a linguistics professor, he stated that among many factors that give Arabic a back seat, are technologies such as the Internet and online books, publications and resources which are all in English and are considered to be justifying factors that deepen the problem. He added that Arabic teachers are still adopting approaches based on memorization that put off students from learning their mother-tongue (Sherif, 2012, Gulf News). Discussing the issue of Arabic being set aside by English, another press interview with a government official responsible for education in

the UAE agreed with parents' perceptions that their Arabic language and Emirati culture are being 'neglected'. He added that what is needed is a shift to a bilingual model of language education because there is currently a disconnection between school education and preparing students for university where English is the medium of instruction. (Ahmed, 2012, The National).

The above data suggests that learning English has changed participants' lives, thoughts and lifestyle on account of the Arabic language and their Emirati cultural identity. They reported that learning English has often affected their Arabic linguistic skills and by now they felt more comfortable in writing English in official correspondence rather than in Arabic and in speaking English and not Arabic.

Significantly, participant one perceived that learning English does not only stop at learning a language but 'it is also influencing our thoughts, our clothes, our culture and many things' (reference Ptp/7) (see appendix 5a). Participant one, when asked about the Arabic language, said that it is not occupying its proper place and 'I do not see it existing' (reference Ptp/47) (see appendix 5a). The same participant, when questioned why Arabs talk together in English, said 'I feel that the Arabic language is starting to disappear (reference Ptp/48) (see appendix 5a). He explained how Arabic is being challenged in the Emirati society because English is spoken at home through non-Arabic speaking maids, and children learn English at school with very few Arabic classes (reference Ptp/56) (see Appendix 5a). The same participant confirmed that he was annoyed and sad at this situation (reference Ptp/63) (see appendix 5a). He added that Arabic is not used enough because 'of the lack of its benefit' (reference Ptp/84) (see appendix 5a). He explained that everywhere English is spoken in the UAE and more importantly, even in government entities all forms and means of communication are in English. He said 'When I go places the Arabic language is cancelled' (reference Ptp/84) (see appendix 5a). Participant number two confessed his shame and said sometimes people say to me "So English is dominating you to that extent...I feel guilty towards this' (reference Ptp/36) (see appendix 5a). Participant six said that the English language is everywhere and that English courses are given in universities but not Arabic (reference Ptp/13) (see appendix 5a).

Participant five relayed what he viewed as a solution to maintain the Arabic language: he said that Arabic should be emphasized and focused upon in schools. He also noted that the responsibility lies with decision makers, the laws and that Arabic should exist in everything, and gave the example of China. Another participant confirmed that if the Arabic language remains as it is currently, eventually ‘English is going to dominate and it will be at the expense of the Arabic language (reference Ptp/21) (see appendix 5a). He added that all government entities should employ more Arabs and must write all official correspondences in Arabic and not English (reference Ptp/21) (see appendix 5a). This participant’s latter comment confirms the above government official remark about the need for a bilingual model of language education (Ahmed, 2012, The National).

The above data suggests that the UAE is justifying its English education in schools in order to prepare Emiratis for higher education where English is the medium of instruction. However, if this is true, this could be accomplished in the case of Arabic as well. Therefore, this data seems to imply that what is needed is a balanced bilingual model whereby school children at an early stage of education are taught in both languages, Arabic and English.

However, participant one mentioned that learning English was not all that bad. He explained learning English ‘it opened up many doors for me’ (reference Ptp/69) (see appendix 5a). He gave examples of the advantages of English such as speaking to foreigners, reading books and magazines and benefiting from the Internet. He was also of the view that learning English made him bring ideas from outside, have a more knowledgeable mind set, and he gained much on a business and professional level.

4.3 Summary of Theme 1

In conclusion, in this section, Theme 1: The Arabic language and its association with Islam, data analysis implied several significant points. As regards the status of Arabic in the UAE, the above analysis indicated that due to the unique demographic population structure of the UAE, English is dominant in the day-to-day activities, in

schools and in higher education. This was due to the majority of inhabitants being non-Arabic speakers.

As regards the Arabic language and the Emirati identity, data analysis seem to indicate that learning a language, in this case English, entails learning its associated culture. Personal interviews and interviews released in the press revealed that having English dominating the linguistic environment of the Emiratis may have ‘detrimental effect’ on the Arabic language and the Emirati identity. Moreover, data suggests that there is a disconnection between school education and preparing Emirati students for university where English is the medium of instruction. Data seems to imply that what is needed is a bilingual school model for young learners.

In addition, analysis suggests that although there is a fear of Arabic being displaced by the English language, there was a strong notion that because Arabic is associated with Islam, it can never perish. Yet, participants and academics in their interviews in the press releases emphasized a great need for corrective measures to place the Arabic language in the forefront of the linguistic landscape of the UAE.

To sum up, the above mainly views English as a contributing factor to the poor Arabic standards; however, my personal interpretation is that not the language itself but the indirect/peripheral factors associated with the country and education system may also have an impact. However, proficiency in English should not interfere with or override Arabic, because without a sound understanding/mastery of their indigenous language, the acquisition of English, primarily through study, will be problematic and may inhibit learning the second language. Curriculum professionals mentioned that interest in Arabic diminishes due to the attractiveness of resources and methodologies of teaching English. Thus they believe that outdated methodologies and learning through memorization may be the cause of low Arabic proficiency. In the coming section, Theme 2: Language Domains and Social Identity in the UAE will be discussed. This theme includes sub-themes: I will discuss whether their language choice in different domains was an obligation or a free choice.

4.4 Theme 2: Language Domains and Social Identity in the UAE

4.4.1 Introduction to Theme 2

This theme based section is concerned with my participants' language choices in different domains and with the questions of how these choices reflect their social identities. It is worth noting that the main purpose of my interviews was to probe the participants' beliefs and insights about their linguistic and cultural identities. I found that their responses needed further investigation regarding their choice of using Arabic or English and their specific domains. As explained in Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods (section 3.6: Procedures), I had sent out emails comprised of 17 different questions in order to find out my participants' language choice in different domains.

I undertook three rounds of interviews: my first round of interviews was one to one interviews; my second round of interviews was also one to one and relied mainly on using photographs as prompts. By doing my third round, I had hoped it would give me a deeper understanding of how my participants felt towards both languages; which language was used when and why and whether they all had the same perception towards both languages. Under this topic I was able to cover three themes: Arabic within the family, Arabic in education and work, and Arabic in public domains.

4.4.2 Language choice within the family (group 1)

As stated in my literature review, Chapter 2, section 2.3: Second Language Learning and Second Language Identities, 'language identity' is concerned with the association between people and the language they use (Block, 2007a). This language identity is a form of the individual's social identity because it discusses language expertise, language affiliation and language inheritance (ibid.). My first emergent sub-theme was concerned with how the participants viewed their social identity in relation to their families and the language they used.

Three out of the five participants, (participants number one, two and three) available to answer my email chose the following eight domains (group 1) to answer: Nuclear family; extended family; work colleagues; friends; neighbors; religious leaders; teachers

and local community. While two other participants, (participants number four and five) chose the following nine domains (group 2): Shopping; visual and auditory media; printed media; cinema and theatre; work; correspondences and telephones and official communication; religious meetings; leisure and hobbies; and information and communication technology.

Two out of the three participants who chose to answer the group of eight questions (group 1) said they speak Arabic with their nuclear family (reference Ptp2/LD1, Ptp3/LD1) (see Appendix 4), while the third participant said he speaks both Arabic and English with his nuclear family (reference Ptp1/LD1) (see Appendix 4). The two participants who chose Arabic had no choice but to speak Arabic to their nuclear family because their families were monolinguals. The three participants gave different justifications for their language choice. Participant number two said he speaks Arabic with his nuclear family because they were Arabs (reference Ptp2/LD1) (see appendix 4), while participant number three said she felt pride in speaking Arabic and out of respect for the home culture (reference Ptp3/LD1) (see appendix 4). It is apparent that due to the nation's young age, earlier generations did not have access to education or to language learning.

Participant number three said they speak Arabic because it was their first language (reference Ptp3/LD1) (see appendix 4). Participant number two said that it was their mother tongue (reference Ptp2/LD1) (see appendix 4), and participant number one said that they use whichever language helps them to get the message across (reference Ptp1/LD1) (see appendix 4). Participant number one said they spoke Arabic at home out of respect to the home culture (reference Ptp1/LD2) (see appendix 4). However, he contradicted himself and also mentioned English was easier for him to express his daily communication and feelings (reference Ptp3/LD4) (see appendix 4). Explaining why he spoke Arabic at home, participant number three said that it was out of respect for his family members who do not speak English (reference Ptp3/LD1) (see appendix 4), participants number two and three said they spoke Arabic at home because they were Arabs and they must use Arabic at home with the family (reference Ptp2/LD1 and Ptp3/LD1) (see appendix 4).

The participants who stated that they choose Arabic with their nuclear and extended family may imply that they felt they had to say Arabic. This is congruent with the answer ‘because we are Arabs’ mentioned earlier. Another reason may be due to the fact that their nuclear and extended families do not speak English and therefore they have no choice but to speak Arabic. It is worth noting here that the UAE is a young nation and most of my participants’ parents and grandparents did not have access to education or to learning languages. Therefore, communicating in Arabic with their nuclear and extended family was not a voluntary act of choice but rather a compulsory one because their family did not speak or had ever learned English and only spoke Arabic (reference Ppt3/LD1) (see Appendix 4).

The coming section will discuss two participants’ language choice, who chose to answer questions related to the following nine domains (group 2): shopping, visual and auditory media, printed media, cinema - theatre - concerts, work, and correspondence - telephone - official communication, religious meetings, leisure and hobbies, and finally information - communication - technology, and the results show a vast discrepancy. I believe that their linguistic behaviour in these domains may give me an indication of how they perceived and were attached to their own Emirati culture and language.

4.4.3 Language choice with friends (group 2)

As mentioned in my literature review, Chapter 2, section 2.4 Theoretical Framework and SIT, individuals comprehend themselves in relation to one another (Norton Pierce, 1995). Moreover, and as stated by Tajfel (1982), people form their own personal identities as individuals and form their social identity based on the groups to which they belong. Therefore, my second sub-theme was concerned with language domains in relation to peer group identities. I investigated how my participants made their language choices when it came to speaking with peer groups and friends outside the family circle.

Responses about the language domain when it came to friends were sometimes also rather controversial and I interpreted many inconsistencies in their replies. Participant number one said he uses English if chatting with friends on a mobile and Arabic when speaking (reference Ptp1/LD4) (see appendix 4). Participant number two said he speaks Arabic with friends because his friends are Arabs (reference Ptp2/LD4) (see appendix

4). Concurring with Wei (1994) that language choice is an ‘act of identity’ (p.2), my participants thus voiced their cultural identity when choosing Arabic and said ‘it is our mother tongue’ (reference Ptp2/LD1) (see appendix 4). Lastly, participant number three chose to speak English and justified it as being easier to express his daily life (reference Ptp3/LD4) (see Appendix 4).

These themes manifested themselves from their responses and I aligned them to my main research question of ‘How do Emirati students conceptualize the relationship between their social identity and the English language’? It could be that my participants felt that Arabic was being set aside by English. Participants projected their socially constructed image of using Arabic more than English. However, data analysis revealed the contrary. It may be concluded that my participants, when questioned about their choice of language domain felt that they had to say Arabic in many instances to safeguard their language, culture and identity. Whether Emiratis consciously or not chose to speak English or Arabic was intriguing to me and I was interested to further deepen my understanding of why and on what basis Emiratis made their language preferences and hence how they project their social identity.

Consequently, I undertook many ad hoc observations of language choices, in different contexts and among a diverse group; i.e. age, sex, societal class, etc., also personally collecting some photographic data, such as shop signs, car park instructions, prospectuses, pamphlet covers, notices and bill-boards in the university where my participants were enrolled. These photographs were used as stimuli during the interviews. In the following section, I will discuss my findings and analyse my interconnected data in order to comprehend the intricacy and nuances of language choice.

4.4.4 Language choice in shopping settings and the media (group 2)

Another very evident sub-theme was that of language use in the domain of shopping. As mentioned in the introductory chapter of this research, the UAE is rather a young nation comprised of seven Emirates. Due to the oil-boom, it is a rapidly growing country with regards to socioeconomics and education and has gained significance in the global spheres. The UAE is currently assuming a more and more cosmopolitan, consumer-

oriented lifestyle. Men and women spend much time in recreational shopping which is a major pastime in the UAE as most families do not have many money constraints. Thus, people spend much of their free time in air conditioned shopping malls, some of which are extremely large and extravagant. These shopping malls contain high street international brands including foods, household goods, clothes, shoes, bags, perfumes, accessories...etc. Moreover, a visit to the mall is a recreational trip for the Emirati family with many attractions for children.

As mentioned in my literature review, Chapter 2, section 2.4 Theoretical Framework and SIT, the social identity of people is formed by the relationship between themselves and the world and how it is constructed through 'time' and space' (Norton, 1997, p. 410). Emiratis tend to live as extended families in large groups and their trips to the malls are no different. It may be construed that the social identity of the Emirati consumer is portrayed in these malls. Emails were sent to the two participants with questions regarding their language choices and in which domains. My data suggests that the two participants who chose to answer the nine questions (group 2) chose English in the 'shopping' setting projecting a consensus that English is used in such settings and that Arabic cannot be used because the entire shopping domain is serviced by non-Arabic speakers (reference Ptp4/LD1 and Ptp5/LD1) (see Appendix 4).

In visual and auditory media, the two participants gave different preferences and provided diverse justifications for their selections. While participant number four chose English because he likes to watch English films and listens to the news in English in order to enhance his English proficiency level (reference Ptp4/LD2 and LD4) (see appendix 4), participant number 5 chose both Arabic and English (reference Ptp5/LD2) (see appendix 4). Thus using English was common with the two participants. These differences may indicate that these Emiratis do not have much choice when it comes to the written and audio media and that English is more widespread in the country. It may also indicate that they feel more comfortable with English visual and auditory media. This may be interpreted as them not having much connection with their Emirati culture when it comes to television and radio.

As mentioned above, several photographs have been used in interviews as stimuli to evoke perceptions of my participants. The following picture is a film promo and was used as a stimulus during the interviews. It received negative comments because although the film was an Arabic film, the promo sign had English writing. The writing was the name of the film written once in Arabic (Red font) and twice in English, (White font and on the main actor's arm). The following interview transcripts clearly show the participants' anger towards having English overriding Arabic even in instances when the reader or receiver of the film is an Arab speaker.



Participant one expressed his anger for having too much English everywhere in his country to the extent that Arabic movies use English writing in their advertisements. He stated that since only an Arabic speaking audience will view the film, there should not be any English writing on the promo poster title, only in Arabic. He said such things make him annoyed (reference Ptp/p20) (see appendix 5b).

Participant number three, also did not comment favourably towards the promo poster, and felt that her country has taken it as customary to insert English everywhere even on Arabic film promos. She reiterated her point that she tried to prove all through the interview and said that it has become a habit in her country that English is used everywhere even when there is no need such as in the case of an Arabic film poster (reference Ptp/p21) (see appendix 5b).

Participant number one stated that in restaurants and coffee shops they sometimes have English only without Arabic which he termed as being ridiculous. He sarcastically stated that English is all over the place, even in Arabic movies and in Menus so if you do not know English you cannot eat in these restaurants or coffee shops (reference Ptp/p20) (see Appendix 5b). The frustration of participant number one is evident that the English language is encroaching too much on the Emirati day-to-day living.

Commenting on the above picture, participant number four was also not happy with the English on an Arabic film promo and he showed resentment that his country would do this. He said that he just cannot comprehend why his country does such things. He stated that it was an Arabic film so English was not required. He remarked that he views this as totally wrong and that no other country would do such things (reference Ptp/p18) (see appendix 5b). The same participant compared his country to France which he had just visited and said as he travelled much he never saw such things as what is happening in his own country. He remarked that only French is used in France although they do have expatriates, yet each one uses his own language (reference Ptp/p19) (see appendix 5b).

The above data may imply that there is an amount of frustration and resentment that this participant has towards using other languages besides Arabic in situations which do not deem it necessary. Participants indicated that they were unhappy at having to use English in public domains when there was no need. However, when participant number two was asked about English in public places she answered that people who do not speak English are considered “backward”, and that speaking English in public is considered being “snobbish”. She stated that she feels angry when Emiratis speak English thinking it is a sign of ‘development’ and ‘civilization’. She stated that it is the foreigners residing in the UAE that should learn Arabic and not the other way around. She later contradicted herself by admitting that she speaks English to her child who has not even started KG 1 (reference Ptp/29) (see appendix 5a)

On a follow-up question, I asked why speaking English was a sign of being ‘civilized’ or ‘developed’ and not ‘backward’, she responded that it is because English is all around and everybody is speaking it (reference Ptp/30) (see Appendix 5a). The above data

seems to confirm the previously stated belief that monolinguals are stereotyped as being uneducated or ‘backward’ or ‘uncivilized’. These participants, I claim, are projecting their social identity which is socially constructed in that they have mastered the English language and thus are educated and belong to the elite.

4.5 Summary of Theme 2

This section discussed mainly language domains and social identity in the UAE. Data obtained and analysed from academics interviews released in the press, one to one interviews with participants and Senior Arabic Curriculum Designers and interviews sent via emails, all confirmed that the UAE is currently facing a language problem as regards the misbalance between English and Arabic, and the risk of Arabic being displaced by English. Ramifications of this problem were recognized to have negative influences on linguistic, cultural and social identities of Emiratis. Language choices and the dominance of English in schools and universities, in shopping malls and with some family members and friends were identified as significant problems that need addressing.

Arabic was the language used with some family members due to the fact that they were uneducated and never learned English or because it was disrespectful for participants not to speak their mother tongue with the family. However, English was also sometimes chosen because it was easier for the participant either due to low Arabic proficiency or because of the dominance of English in their daily life. When it came to shopping malls and public places, data indicated that English was dominant due to the unique demographic population of the UAE. It was recognized that non-Arabic speakers serve the entire domains of shopping malls, public places, transportation, restaurants, etc. Thus, data revealed that English was compulsory and not mastering it was looked upon as being ‘backward’ or ‘uneducated’. This fact reveals the societal pressure placed by Emiratis themselves on each other.

Finally, the dominance of English as stated above was highly resented both by my participants and academics as expressed in the media. It was clear that they felt angry because of the lack of Arabic in their daily life and in the educational settings. Participants of this research blamed the decision-makers and language policy officials

for the delineation of the Arabic language. Participants did recognize the association of language with identity and felt they need to secure their Arabic language and Emirati identities. As noted in Chapter 2, section 2.3 second language learners and second language identities, people hold several identities as they occupy multiple roles and simultaneously are members of many groups (Buke & Stets, 2009). The academics blamed the old methodologies and teaching materials for the lack of students' motivation to learn and use Arabic.

After discussing theme 2: language domains and the social identity in the UAE, I will now outline the final theme generated from the data: language hierarchy and social identity in the UAE.

4.6 Theme 3: Language hierarchy and social identity in the UAE

4.6.1 Introduction to Theme 3

The coming third and last section of my data analysis will discuss how languages are viewed and used in the UAE and the effect that this may have on the Emirati social identities. As mentioned in my literature review, Chapter 2, section 2.4 theoretical framework and social identity theory, identities are social constructs and are reshaped, maintained and modified by social relations (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). It is thus significant to this research to see how the prevalence of one language over another impacts on the social identities of Emiratis.

4.6.2 Relation between English and Arabic in the UAE (in Higher Education)

There are claims that the low Arabic proficiency in the UAE may be due to systems and policies implemented by the government in schools and higher education due to the dominance of English over Arabic. This concept will be discussed in the coming section based on one-to-one interviews and interviews released in the press with academics and education officials.

As mentioned earlier in section 4.3.1 Introduction to Theme 2 of this chapter, I used photographs as prompts during my second round of one to one interviews. I took several pictures within the Sorbonne University and Abu Dhabi University and asked my participants to comment on them. The Sorbonne University is the private French

educational institution where my eight participants studied and the Abu Dhabi University is a semi-government institution. My aim of introducing photographs from another university was to get a diversified collection of photographs which the participants are not familiar with. I did not guide my participants towards any specific themes, but left them to freely state their opinions.

One picture was composed of the Sorbonne French University logo and their 75th Anniversary. The logo contained mixed languages. The word university was written in French while Abu Dhabi was written in English. It is worth mentioning that the common metaphor ‘bridge between civilizations’ was written in French above its Arabic translation.



Participant number one when asked about the picture said that it was inappropriate to place the French above the Arabic and interpreted it as not being respectful to the nationals (reference Ptp1/p2) (see Appendix 5b). I showed my participants a photograph of a banner at the main entrance hall of the Abu Dhabi University. The words on the banner read ‘Abu Dhabi University Knowledge Group’ in both Arabic and English, with Arabic coming first. The picture was of military soldiers and some Emirati men. One of my participant’s interpretations of the picture came as a surprise to me. Her interpretation was surprising because the picture was of Emirati soldiers in military

uniform who occupied a huge part of the picture while the text of both English and Arabic was relatively small.



Two of the three participants failed to see the connection between the picture and the text in the picture. Participant one interpreted the soldiers in the banner as that perhaps the university knowledge group equips students to join the army (reference Ptp/p5) (see appendix 5b), while participant number two said that there is no connection between the text and the picture (reference Ptp/p5) (see appendix 5b). However, participant number one remarked that the university logo has been changed in this banner, although maintaining the colours of the flag, it had a different design. He commented that it was important to keep the colours of the flag (reference Ptp/p5) (see appendix 5b).

Consequently, participant number three emphasized the Arabic translation and how it was incorrect. She interpreted the wrong Arabic translation as being due to the fact that the university does not 'give importance' to Arabic translation (reference Ptp/p1) (see Appendix 5b). Participant number three remarked how much it makes her feel 'sad' when she thinks of the state of the Arabic language and that she interprets it as 'Arabic really going down' (reference Ptp/p103) (see Appendix 5b). She expressed her sadness saying that Arabic is not cared about and that all importance is given to English (reference Ptp/p100) (see Appendix 5b). Participant number seven explained that she

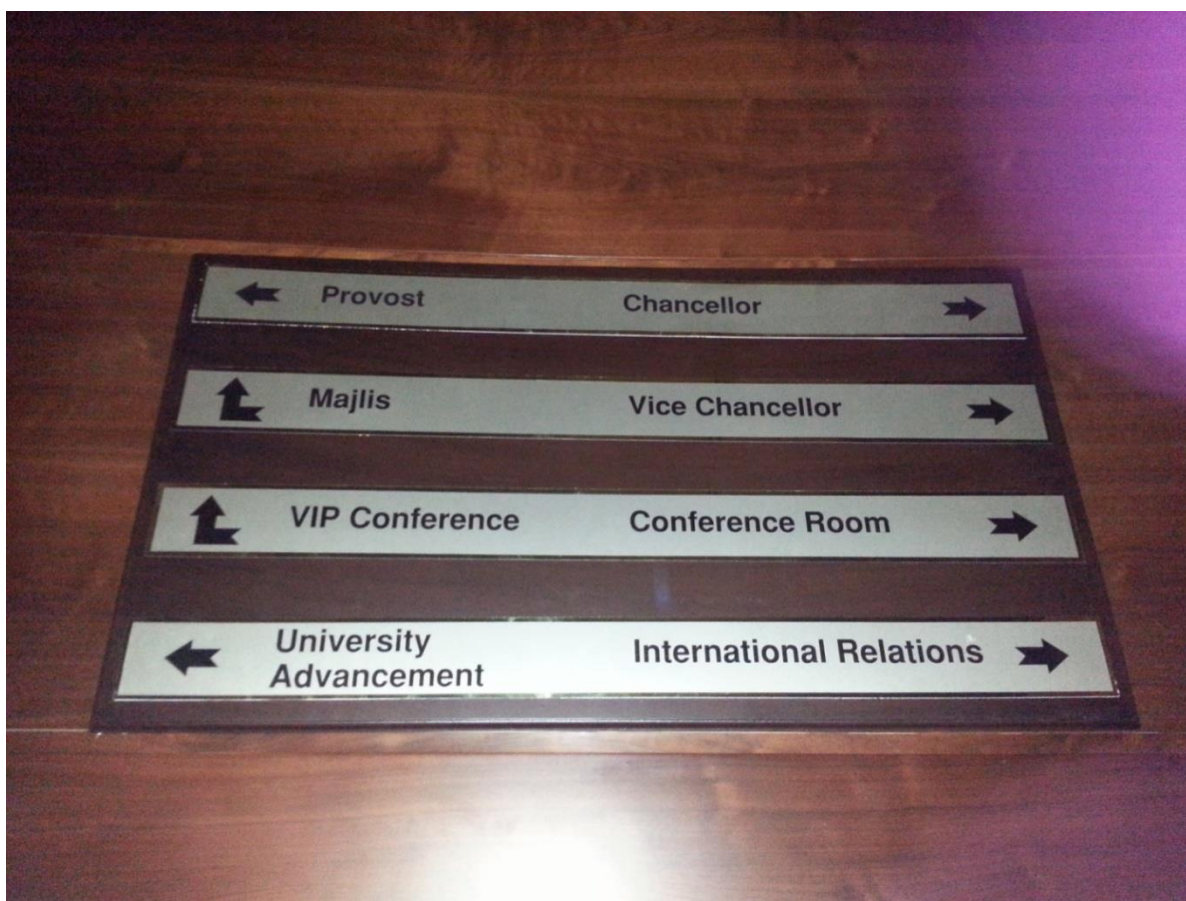
blames the schools and claims that school graduates are illiterate in Arabic (reference Ptp/p22) (see Appendix 5b). In addition, she clarified her perspective saying that universities teach in English in order to graduate a student who can compete in the global market (reference Ptp/p23) (see Appendix 5b). Participant number four pondered on Arabic education in the past and explained that teachers used to be motivated and fond of graduate students who mastered and were proud of their mother tongue, but unfortunately this was not the current situation (reference Ptp/p4) (see Appendix 5b).

Data seems to imply that the above responses do shed light on several important issues. The three participants commenting on the above picture had different points of view. One did not see any connection between the text and picture and did not comment on the logo. The second remarked that the logo had a different design but maintained the flag's colours, which to him was most important. It could be said that the flag's colours, which he identified with his Emirati identity, were the most important thing even if they were exhibited with a different design as long as they maintained the sequence. The third participant gave more importance to the Arabic translation and how the banner with the wrong Arabic translation indicates the University's neglect of good Arabic. The researcher interprets the third participant to have shown much frustration and exhibited her utmost sadness of the state of the Arabic language not only in the university but in the country in general.

Not commenting like her colleagues on the flag or the soldiers but remarking on the Arabic language was an indication of her frustration. I should draw attention to the fact that when I showed the pictures to my participants, I did not comment. I left any remarks to them so as not to direct their attention to any issue. This participant felt, I believe, that it was a burning issue for her, and this picture was a justification to comment on the state of Arabic in the UAE. She claimed that the blame falls on schools and teachers who are currently, not like before, jealous about teaching and graduating students with a strong Arabic proficiency level. Finally, she argued that this issue is all due to the fact that English is the main language of instruction in all universities in the UAE and therefore schools are obliged to provide graduates based on 'supply and demand'.

As a reflective researcher, I believe my questions and choice of photographs may be perceived as leading questions. I therefore believe if I was to repeat this study, I may select different photographs that would not clearly show the difference of language choice and/or the prevalence of English and in some cases, the total absence of Arabic. The latter may have led to different responses from participants.

Another picture was shown to my participants indicating the direction signs. The picture raised many remarks and aggressive comments against the English language due to the fact that the university direction signs were all written in English with no Arabic.



Participant number one expressed her concern and remarked that most of the previous pictures were in both languages: Arabic and English while this one was only in English.

She added that we must ‘concentrate’ on Arabic and give Arabic ‘importance’ (reference Ptp/p.21) (See appendix 5b). Similarly, participant number two commented that by placing only English on the direction signs, in comparison to the previous bilingual pictures, they [the university] have ‘spoiled everything’ (reference Ptp/p23) (see appendix 5b). The third participant made reference to the ‘English only signs’, to be the reason why her four nieces had ‘very bad, really pathetic Arabic’ (reference Ptp/p22) (see appendix 5b). The first participant remarked that the university is giving a message, by placing all its directions signs in English, that Arabic is not important (reference Ptp/p21) (see appendix 5b). Similarly, the second interviewee commented that even when they [the university] wanted to write Arabic, they wrote the word ‘Majlis’ which is an Arabic word, but they wrote it using English letters (reference Ptp/p23) (see appendix 5b).

The first participant interpreted the Arabic word written in English as being the university’s way of teaching non-Arab speakers an Arabic word (reference Ptp/p21) (see appendix 5b). Participant number two remarked that when Arabs do not see their Arabic language around the university, they tend to forget it (reference Ptp/p21) (see appendix 5b). She finally expressed her frustration by not knowing Arabic as well as she used to because of her university years (reference Ptp/23) (see appendix 5b). Similarly, participant number three blamed the universities for the low level of Arabic proficiency among students (reference Ptp/14) (see appendix 5a). She clarified that in the current education system, the schools are following the universities regarding the need for high English proficiency for students to qualify for higher education. In her belief, it should be the other way round; schools should enforce their will on universities and the language of instruction in higher education should be both Arabic and English; and if one language must supersede, then it should be Arabic (Ptp/14, see appendix 5a). Moreover, participant number six also blamed the university for their poor Arabic and said everything was in English (Ptp/14, appendix 5a).

As is clear from the above participants’ interpretations of the photographs, the researcher attributes all their perceptions to strictly focusing on the absence of Arabic in the ‘direction signs’ in the University. A fact which they unanimously are not in favour

of and have all confirmed is that they view Arabic as being displaced by English, or that English has ‘encroached’ on Arabic, as expressed by participant number three (reference Ptp/9 and Ptp/20) (see appendix 5a). It is also worth noting that the three participants blame universities for teaching in English and thus giving much less importance to Arabic. The picture is the living proof, as they see it, of the university downgrading the Arabic language to the extent that all the direction signs are only in English. They also gave examples of how currently they themselves have almost lost their proficiency in the Arabic language after years in the universities.

My discourse analysis of the interviews also confirmed the above notion as perceived by my participants. There was a strong sense amongst several participants that the Arabic language is being threatened by English, as stated above. It is exemplified by how they see the link between the Arabic language and their perception that English is compulsorily superseding Arabic in their daily personal, academic and professional communication.

Participant number eight said that Arabic has been encroached on by English and that it was much better in her parents’ time because life and culture were more ‘authentic’ (reference Ptp/18) (see appendix 5a). Participant number two explained how English was so prevalent by relaying the anecdote of the Minister of Education when he visited a school. He asked in Arabic a 4th grade student - almost 9 years old - how good his Arabic language was, the student answered ‘Very well’ in Arabic. Then the Minister, talking Arabic again said can you give me a word that starts with ‘Sh’ (the Sh sound in Arabic is one letter), and the student immediately replied ‘SHOES’. The participant then commented that this sad story only indicates how Arabic and English are so imbalanced in the UAE (reference Ptp/17) (see appendix 5a). It is worth noting here that such anecdotes may not actually have taken place, and that they are constructs of the prevailing media and of popular discourse.

Along the same lines, another example of how much participants feel that English is displacing Arabic, is when participant number five said that everything is written in English; emails, messages, chats on social media, to the extent that when he receives Arabic messages he does not read them because he has become so accustomed to

reading and writing in English (reference Ptp/27) (see appendix 5a). Participant number one said that in the working environment, in schools and universities, everything is in the English language (reference Ptp/86) (see appendix 5a). Participant number seven made a logical connection between the Arabic and English languages and their usage in the Emirates by explaining that because 80% of the population in the UAE are foreigners and only 20% are Arabs, it is no surprise that English is used 80% of the time and Arabic only 20% (reference Ptp/18) (see appendix 5a). Finally, Participant number seven, also talking about how English is spoken everywhere on a daily basis, said that the situation has become impossible to tolerate (reference Ptp/20) (see appendix 5a), referring to the wide-spread existence of non-Arab speakers.

The above data may suggest that several participants clearly felt that Arabic was being set aside and that English was taking the place of Arabic in higher education settings. As explained by them, it has become clear that English is used everywhere and is in great demand for education and work. One participant went as far as saying that because her sister has not mastered the English language, she was looked down upon as being ‘uneducated’, as I mentioned earlier. There is a clear contradiction between this latter statement and what was mentioned previously by the participant. The participant felt that although English was dominating over Arabic, because they read the Koran and prayed in Arabic, this will safeguard their language and as one mentioned, Arabic comes from ‘within’.

Data suggests that in spite of the evident extensive use of the English language as portrayed by them, my participants have mixed feelings about Arabic being under threat because of English. They believe that Islam and the Koran cannot die and thus its associated language will hold strong forever. Nonetheless, and in an attempt to understand and analyse the more complex nuances of the above statements from my interviews, I believe several explanations come to the forefront.

There is a possibility that they are just trying to convince themselves of this notion, and accordingly are satisfied with the Arabic status in their country continuing to be strong. Their belief that Arabic will remain strong because of the Holy Koran may be true in some countries and not others. I believe that for countries such as the Kingdom of Saudi

Arabia or in certain communities, such as the wider Arab-Islamic civilization, or in specific domains such as mosques this may be true. However, their assurance of Arabic strength and prevalence may be faulty in the UAE. Another significant point is that one of the participants expressed her perceived notion that Emiratis, who are Arabic monolinguals are being stereotyped as uneducated, which portrays the social pressures being put on those who do not speak or master English.

It is worth noting in this context that I asked all participants to choose the language for my interviews when answering my questions and all of them chose to speak Arabic. Yet, all eight participants code switched between English and Arabic by words, connectors, phrases or even sentences from the other language. They did not code switch to English in the case of fillers, junctions or to explain a word or thought, but actually used English because the Arabic word, phrase or sentence was not readily in their mind and that English comes easier. Kindly refer to a later statement by participant number two (reference Ptp/26) (see appendix 5a) which supports this issue. They did not know how to express themselves in their own mother tongue and English came to them faster when they spoke. After doing so, they ironically commented on their own code switching. Participant number eight, while speaking in Arabic, talked about how English is dominating and why Arabic is rarely used and asked me to look around his surrounding environment and said that everything is in English, the books he reads, the movies he watches, messages on mobiles, etc. (reference Ptp/5) (see appendix 5a).

Participant number one, when asked about the Arabic language said that it does not 'exist' and is not appreciated enough or in its 'deserved place' (reference Ptp/47) (see appendix 5a). The same participant, when questioned about why Arabs talk together in English said that she felt the Arabic language is starting to disappear (reference Ptp/54) (see appendix 5a). The same participant explained how Arabic is being challenged in the Emirati society because English is spoken at home through non-Arabic speaking maids and children learn English at school, while there are very few Arabic classes (reference Ptp/56) (see appendix 5a). The same participant confirmed that he was annoyed and sad at this situation (reference Ptp/83) (see appendix 5a). He added that Arabic was not used enough because there is not much benefit from it (reference Ptp/84) (see appendix 5a),

explaining that English is spoken everywhere, and more importantly, even in government entities all forms and means of communication is in English. He explained that wherever he goes Arabic is missing (reference Ptp/84) (see appendix 5a). Participant number two confessed his shame and said that sometimes people tease him by saying how English has dominated him which makes him feel guilty (reference Ptp/36) (see appendix 5a).

Participant number five relayed what he perceived as solutions to maintain the Arabic language and said that Arabic should be emphasized and focused upon in schools. He also noted that the responsibility lies with decision makers, the laws and that Arabic should exist in everything. In addition, he suggested that the nation should ban importation of any 'games, or cars unless it is in Arabic' (reference Ptp/31) (see appendix 5a), and gave the example of China. Another participant confirmed that if the Arabic language remains as it is currently, eventually English will dominate. He added that as a solution to this problem, all government entities should employ more Arabs and must write all official correspondences in Arabic and not English (reference Ptp/31) (see appendix 5a).

However, participant number three mentioned that learning English was not all that bad. He explained learning English opened up many doors for him. He gave examples such as speaking to foreigners, reading English books and magazines and benefiting from the Internet. He also viewed that learning English made him bring ideas from abroad gave him a more knowledgeable mind-set and that he gained much on a business and professional level (reference Ptp/19) (see appendix 5a).

4.6.3 Language choice in education and work (educational and professional identities).

The relationship between language and culture is a complex one. It is not as simple as saying that language and its culture are closely linked to one another, or, as in the case of teaching English as a lingua franca, that language has no contact with its attached culture (Risager, 2007). During my initial round of interviews, I therefore attempted to explore how my participants perceived their Emirati culture and their language choice in

education and work. I noticed that the majority did relate their Arabic linguistic identity to their Emirati cultural identities.

Data implied that most participants demonstrated their discontent about speaking English in their own Arab country and indicated that they felt bad when Arabic was mixed with English. Interestingly, some participants expressed embarrassment when speaking English in public when their audience was all Arabs. In addition, some preferred countries like the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, France or Japan where local languages are highly valued and English does not displace the inhabitants' own mother tongue.

Participant number one explained that if an Arab spoke to him in English he would answer back in Arabic (reference Ptp/65) (see appendix 5a). Participant number one also, expressed his worry about the lack of Arabic around him and that sometimes things were written only in English such as menus in restaurants (reference Ptp/86) (see appendix 5a). Participant number two believed that as everything around him is in English, non-English speakers are taken as 'backward' (reference Ptp/30) (see appendix 5a). However, some participants, like participant number three justified his preference in speaking English in certain situations, especially technical ones, which force them to speak English because their Arabic equivalent is extremely difficult, such as 'hard disc' or 'blue tooth' (reference Ptp/13). But not only in technical language is Arabic replaced by English; participant number four mentioned that even in their daily communication at home with family, they have got used to using English words instead of Arabic, and that her father scolds her for not being able to speak Arabic without mixing English in her sentences. She gave an example of such words being said in English as 'light' and 'charge' (reference Ptp/1) (see appendix 5a).

Whether in schools or universities, data suggests that participants are dissatisfied with the absence of Arabic and the prevalence of English. The following participants' transcripts indicate their rejection of having English as a medium of instruction in higher education and schools. It is worth noting here that my participants were graduates of government schools but their university was a foreign French school. Participant two

voiced anxiety and shame when asked about her language choice in the university; she said that three quarters of their talk is done in English. She exclaimed that they even talk English among themselves and to their professors even if an Arabic subject is being taught at the university (reference Ptp/36) (see appendix 5a).

When asked about the importance of learning the Arabic language and who was responsible for the status of the Arabic language in the UAE, participant two explained that when he talks Arabic, he is declaring that he is an Arab and thus, in his view, people should first learn the importance of Arabic before being taught the language (reference Ptp/97) (see appendix 5a). He further explained that Arabic is not merely a language, and that it is directly related to identity. Therefore, he pointed out, when we teach the Arabic language we are enforcing the Emirati identity (reference Ptp/98) (see appendix 5a). In response to a direct question as to who was responsible for the current status of Arabic the same participant answered 'the schools (reference Ptp/101) (see appendix 5a).

Discussing the same issue, participant four also blamed the schools for the poor Arabic proficiency. She stated that English is now dominating because of having too many expatriates in the country and that school curriculums are in English. She commented that even Mathematics and Science are taught in English. She added that her sister-in-law is currently in college studying to become a teacher and is instructed to teach Science and Math in English. She finally wondered 'where is the Arabic language?' (reference Ptp/5) (see appendix 5a). The latter participant compared the time when she was in school some time ago, when she had a good grasp of the Arabic language, yet once she entered university, her English was enhanced and her Arabic became less proficient (reference Ptp/12) (see appendix 5a).

Participant five expressed concern that even in government universities the official language was English though the students do reject it. He relayed a story when he was giving a workshop in Ajman University, and was speaking English as instructed by the university. He noticed a student who told him you must speak Arabic; that we are all Arab speakers here, so why talk English. Then, he explained that the official teaching language of the university is English. Then, although this was a government university,

its official language was English, and the students study in English, but they did not want him to speak English (reference Ptp/8) see appendix 5a).

In the same instance above, another Emirati student strongly rejected speaking English, as participant five told this researcher also during his teaching. He relayed that he noticed another female Emirati student just sitting there and not engaging in the lecture or responding to the professor. He said she looked like she did not understand what I was saying in English. As he approached her and asked her reason for her disengagement, she replied that she only 'answers in Arabic'. The participant explained how surprised he was because this student entered university where she knew that English was the medium of instruction (reference Ptp/9) (see appendix 5a). Participant seven, commenting on the dominance of English and absence of Arabic in schools, said Arabic must be the first language. 'The mother tongue, in schools it should be the basic language, students should learn Arabic first then English which is not the case now' (reference Ptp/22) (see appendix 5a).

Participant eight, when asked about Arabic and English in schools and universities again repeated almost the same sadness and rejection of the Arabic language, and the dominance of English in the educational areas. He directly blamed the policy decision makers for the misbalance of languages in the UAE and the effect it has on the Emirati identity. He remarked that what they currently have in the UAE is a big problem concerning Arabic and that this needs a big solution. In his point of view, he commented that the education system must change and the change starts in schools. He added that English should not be introduced at such an early stage of learning and that Arabic must be the focus because it is the mother-tongue. He said that Arabic must first be taught very well and after the students master it, then they may learn English and it should be taught as a second language only to be used upon need such as when they meet foreigners. But not in everyday living, not surrounding us like it is now. He said that he heard that there are people, maybe decision makers, who want and are taking steps to bring back the Arabic language to the status it deserves. They want to return to the glory of the Arabic language, the glory that it once had. He ended by saying that he hoped

decision makers would do something about it because the Arabic language is going to ‘vanish’ (reference Ptp/13) (see appendix 5a).

The same participant, number eight added that it is because we are now living in globalization, and the world is a small village, this is what globalization is all about. He explained his view that if they do not take care and are aware of what is happening, it will take away their culture, their language and this is extremely dangerous. But they must hold onto their Emirati identity and not let anything or anyone influence it or affect it in any way. He gave an example of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia who are now doing a huge campaign to revive the Arabic language and bring it back to the place and glory it once had. He ended his comments by stating that he feels ashamed when he thinks of the issue of Arabic in his country (reference Ptp/14) (see appendix 5a).

The above data may indicate that my participants were not happy with the dominance of English in their educational spheres, whether in schools or universities. It may be interpreted that they were expressing resentment against their educational identities which was being imposed on them. This imposition was forced on them by the educational system and language policy decision makers of the country. They also expressed fear, not only towards their Arabic language being demeaned and that it may ‘vanish’, but also voiced anger because of danger that English may pose to their Arabic Emirati cultural identities and asked that the education system should change. They requested that due attention be given to the negative effects of having English in all educational stages on the account of their mother tongue. In sum, schools and universities teach much more English than Arabic. In schools Mathematics and Science are taught in English which leaves only Islamic and Social studies to be taught in Arabic. English is the medium of instruction in higher education, whether government or private universities.

4.6.4 Relation between English and Arabic in UAE (In public space)

It is worth noting here that the researcher does acknowledge that some pictures may have provoked ‘reactivity’. The pictures do prioritize Anglophone cultures over Arabic speaking ones and thus other out of university pictures were also shown to participants

in order to lessen reactivity. General street signs are discussed in the following section. .



As an example of the daily sights within the context in the UAE, I took a photograph of a parking street sign. The sign was in blue and white, like all street signs made by the Government and it was composed of both text and symbol. The text reads parking in Arabic and is followed by an arrow, then the word parking in English, using a big P

which is an international symbol understood by all. Unanimously, the four participants agreed it was a good sign and almost gave the same reasons for their opinions. They all agreed that the Government takes into account the many foreigners residing in UAE and that is why Arabic and English are both used. Participant number one noted that she liked it because the sign was big and easily read and she associated her appreciation with the colours; white and blue where white is for peace and blue for the sky (reference Ptp/p16) (see appendix 5b).

Participant number two stated that writing Arabic on top of the English was a good thing because Arabic is the language of their religion (reference Ptp/p17) (see appendix 5b). She also admired the picture because it respected the non-Arabic speakers by writing parking directions in English (reference Ptp/p18) (see appendix 5b). Participant number three associated starting the new parking signs to the fact that the UAE now has too many foreigners (reference Ptp/p17) (see appendix 5b). On a follow-up question of how it made her feel, she replied that sometimes she does not feel that she is in her own country, and wishes one day all the signs would be in Arabic once all the non-Arabic speaking foreigners leave the country. She accounted for the two languages on the sign, as being that they have too many foreigners, and that they were a young nation with a very small population of nationals (reference Ptp/p16) (see appendix 5b). Participant number four replicated the same notions and stated that their government realizes that too many residents are non-Arabic speakers and hence the two languages in street signs. She finally complimented the government for making the signs clear, well made, with big symbols and writing which is easily read (reference Ptp/p13) (see appendix 5b).

Acknowledging the visual design, all my participants complimented their government for making all street signs in both Arabic and English. They all agreed that the latter was proof of more non-Arabic speakers than Arabic speakers. A truth which they hoped in time would vanish. The above data indicates that participants showed appreciation for government efforts in making it easy for non-Arabic speakers to live in the UAE. The participants of this study have a great sense of patriotism and stick firmly to their government and its efforts.



This picture represents one of the many street name signs in UAE. It is in blue and white and has the street name clearly written in Arabic, followed by the English. It is worth noting that the word street in Arabic is written in full while in English it is also written in full. It also clearly marks the zone and street number in both Arabic and English written separately in two blocks.

Two of the four participants remarked about how the government is supportive of foreigners living in the UAE by writing street signs in Arabic and English. On a follow-up question as to whether they view this as being a positive gesture from the government, participant number three remarked that because of the many non-Arabic speakers, they are 'forced' to write in English. She added that by having too many foreigners, she is afraid that this may have a negative influence on their Emirati

language and attire. She finally stated that as Emiratis they should hold onto their culture, traditions, and heritage. She stated that because they are still a young nation, they still need so many expatriates in the country. However, she commented that this situation would not be for long and that she wished to see her nation with many fewer non-Arabic speaking people. She explained the reason for having so much English everywhere is because of having so many ‘Westerners’. She voiced concerns about how their presence among them may have negative effects on some Emiratis. She explained that this influence may be in the way they dress or talk or even the language they choose to speak. She confirmed that they were Emiratis and should remain so holding on to their culture, their traditions, and their heritage and never to let go (reference Ptp/p20) (see appendix 5b).

Participant number four, who also appreciated the government’s efforts on being sensitive to non-Arabic speakers, reiterated that she admired the colours and the details in the sign. However, participant number three had a different perspective of how she interpreted the street sign. She hoped that one day she would only see Arabic in street signs, names of restaurants, and menus in coffee shops. Responding to a follow-up question as to why, she stated that if foreigners are living in her country they should use her language. She stated that sometimes she feels she is not in her country, but people tell her it is because the UAE is still a young nation and the population is very small so we need foreigners to help build the country. She ended by saying ‘Maybe after some time we can rely on ourselves and all the foreigners will leave. Then all the signs will be in Arabic only’ (reference Ptp/p16) (see appendix 5b).

The above data seems to imply that my participants’ attitudes and perception that Arabic is being set aside by English is due to the foreigners residing in the country. They justified this by being a young nation with a small population of Emiratis, and currently need foreigners to help build the country. However, it was clear that they were not happy with the status quo and were hoping that one day Arabic would prevail in their public space. It was also perceived that they feared for their Emirati culture, including language and dress codes, from having too many non-Arabic speakers in the UAE. It is interesting to note that the sign contained three modes: writing, image and colour and

yet these two Emiratis only commented on the use of language choice (writing). I interpret this to be associated with their belief that their language may be endangered by the influx of English, even in their street signs.

The above is confirmed by participant number two and number three who wished that one day they would have restaurant names and coffee shop menus only in Arabic. Thus, data suggests that these participants are exhibiting a kind of ‘linguistic’ dislike towards having English in their street signs that they have to see daily. Also, participant one has the same perception and dislike of having both languages and stressed the fact that this was due to having too many foreigners. My conclusion to the above is that the four participants do feel unease towards the bilingual signs, and wish one day all their texts in public places, such as street signs and menus in restaurants be written only in Arabic.

Thematic analysis from interviews in the press revealed that there is a strong perception that the Arabic language is losing dominance as a communication tool, especially among the younger generation. Emphasis is made by Dr. Fatima Badri, a Professor of Linguistics at the American university in Sharjah who stated in a newspaper interview that the danger lies in not using the Arabic language because usage makes the language stay alive (Constantine & Al Lawaki, 2007). Dr. Badri warned that many languages die because they are not being spoken by its people. To confirm the latter, one of the two Arabic curriculum designers interviewed stated that the hardest of these challenges is that Emirati students are lacking the environment to practice and use Arabic in their daily life (reference ACD1/5).

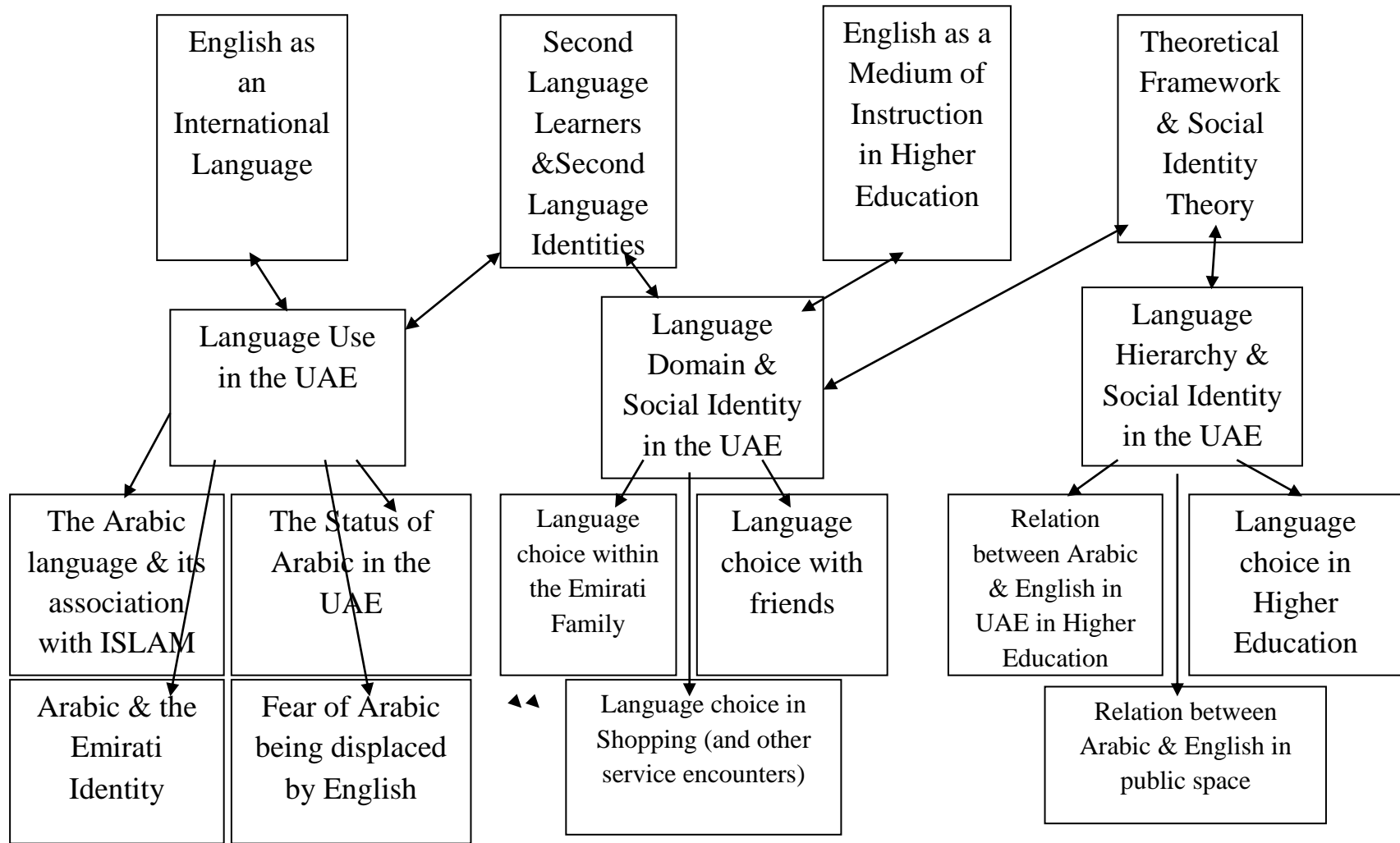
In addition, and also during a press released interview, one academic said that because of globalization and the sweeping use of English, people tend to lose trust in their own mother tongue (The National Editorial, 2015). When asked about the current status of the Arabic language in the UAE, one of the two senior designers personally interviewed gave an interesting analogy about it and said that Arabic is now like a fatally ill person who was being pitied by his family; as if his family are silently whispering to themselves that their sick relative is not well but nor is he dead and we have got rid of him (E2/8).

4.7 Summary of Theme 3

Data in this section seems to indicate that press release interviews and the researcher's own one to one interviews were not so outstandingly different. It is therefore possible to conclude after careful analysis that there is a similar perception as seen by the participants, both interviewed and by interviews released in the press by academics and education experts, that Arabic is actually at risk and that the government is taking corrective steps to develop the Arabic language in education to a satisfactory level within the UAE. It is worth noting here that we cannot claim generalization on the later statements as they are only a result of participants' perceptions, and press release interviews.

However, in terms of actual implementation, there seems to be a controversial issue being raised by the Arabic Senior curriculum designers interviewed and the press releases. Subjects like Mathematics and Science are now being taught in English in schools. This was not the case prior to 2010. English is the language of instruction in both government and foreign universities. In addition, parents' belief is that English has a high value in the job market. All these factors, I think, generate the perception that English is a high status language and Arabic is at a disadvantage. Maybe this implies that the balance and proportions of both languages are questionable and that Arabic in its current scope will not develop competent Arabic speaking Emiratis.

On another point, the participants of this study expressed anger at not using or mastering Arabic as much as they would wish to in the UAE because of several reasons: the extensive influx of non-Arabic speaking expatriates; education is in English in higher education; Arabic is only a taught subject in schools as a language and a medium of instruction for Islamic and Social Studies subjects and there is minimal benefit from Arabic when it comes to knowledge, media and the outside world. However, and although participants do believe that English is overriding Arabic in the UAE, they confirm that Arabic will never end because of its binding association with Islam. Their conviction is due to the fact that Arabic is the language of the Holy Koran and thus will never fade away.



4.8 Summary of Chapter 4

Data suggests that participants perceive a strong association between Arabic and Islam. Although there was a sense of fear and sadness that Arabic is not used by Emiratis, they revealed that because of Islam, Arabic would always be safe. This contradiction was also viewed by the misbalance between the government efforts to preserve Arabic and the education system in schools and universities. English is the medium of instruction in schools and universities and Arabic is viewed as having less benefit in order to pursue knowledge and education.

When it came to language domains, data seems to indicate that participants use Arabic only with immediate family members because they do not know English. However, English is used in schools, universities, the work place, public services and in various landscape scenes.

Participants, education and linguistic experts as expressed in the press, consider Arabic to be at risk in the UAE, and English to be a status symbol. Arabic monolinguals were stereotyped as ‘uncivilized’, and ‘uneducated’. Data seems to indicate that besides the prevalence of English, some causes for the low Arabic proficiency were: lack of its benefit when it came to knowledge and the media; traditional methods for teaching Arabic, absence of well-trained Arabic teachers; and un-engaging teaching material leads to students’ lack of motivation to learn the language.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction to Chapter 5

This chapter will start with the main findings of my research and will then suggest possible answers to the main research question. I will then discuss some unexpected outcomes that emerged during the research. I will then explain how my research contributes to the body of knowledge, and helps to build theory in the field of teaching English as an International Language.

The overall aim of this study was to investigate and understand the attitudes, perceptions and interpretations of Emirati students towards the English language and social identity. It also sought to examine how Emirati learners' perceptions of English may influence their learning of the target language.

Moreover, and due to the UAE's unique demographic misbalance, Emiratis are much fewer in number than the expatriates residing in the UAE. Thus, non-Arabic speakers constitute the majority of the population and there is a general fear that the Arabic language is under risk from the intrusion of English. This is supported by an interview with one academic, released in the papers, who said that language is the bearer of identity and that the gradual loss of the Arabic language is a serious problem that needs immediate attention (Salem, 2014) (see Chapter 2, sub-section 2.5).

5.2 Summary of major findings

This study has aimed to analyse, explain and understand how Emirati learners of English conceptualize the relationship between social identity and the English language. As it will be seen in the following sections, three interesting findings have emerged from this study: first, and according to my participants' interview responses and interviews released in the press by education and linguistic professors, English dominates over Arabic in language teaching and in the linguistic landscape in the UAE. This is supported by an interview released in the press with one of the academics who stated that the Arabic language was not given its deserved respect at universities because English is the medium of instruction (Srinivasan, 2005) (see Chapter 2). Another

education expert stated in a newspaper interview that parents fear teaching Mathematics and Science subjects in English in schools, and expressed rightly, the parents' unease that the Emirati language and culture are being neglected (Barakat, 2013) (see Chapter 2). Moreover, participant number three also supported the latter claim and said she feels 'sad' (reference Ptp/p103) (see appendix 5b) when she thinks of the state of the Arabic language, and that she interprets it as 'Arabic really going down' (reference Ptp/p103) (see appendix 5b) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4). She expressed her sadness saying that Arabic is not cared about and that all importance is given to English (reference Ptp/p100) (see Appendix 5b), (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.1.)

Secondly, Emirati students are thought to have a low level of Arabic proficiency although Arabic is supposed to be their mother-tongue. This is supported by the interview data when participant two expressed her frustration by not knowing Arabic as well as she used to because of her university years (reference Ptp/23) (see appendix 5b), (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4). Similarly, participant number three blamed the universities for the low level of Arabic proficiency among students (reference Ptp/14) (see appendix 5a), (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4). In addition, participant number three clarified that schools are following the universities regarding the need for high English proficiency for students to qualify for higher education. It was her belief, that the process should be the other way round; schools should enforce their will on universities and the language of instruction in higher education should be both Arabic and English, and if one language must supersede, then it should be Arabic (reference Ptp/14) (see appendix 5a). Moreover, participant number six also blamed the university for their poor Arabic and said/complained that everything was in English (reference Ptp/14, appendix 5a), (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4).

Thirdly, interviews with academic professors released in the press confirmed that English is not the sole reason contributing to the poor Arabic standards. Many causes have been given by experts in the field of language education in both schools and universities: the fact that Arabic is still being taught in schools by traditional memorization methods, the unavailability of engaging resources and untrained teachers (see Chapter 2), people being unaware of the influence of 'wholesale adoption of

English on their linguistic abilities' (Constantine & Al Lawati, 2007) (see Chapter 2). Many voiced concern and requested a bilingual model to be implemented in the UAE to safeguard the Arabic language while at the same time teaching English because it is now a lingua franca (National Editorial, 2014) (see Chapter 2). Some academics went as far as claiming that Arabic has become a second or third language in UAE and that English was 'seducing' Emiratis (Pennington, 2015) (see Chapter 2).

I personally believe that the above notions may reflect more the opinion and perception of the interviewee than the actual state of affairs. Indeed, if these elements are true, then this raises the issue regarding the state of Arabic resources of teaching and whether it should develop materials and methodologies parallel to those adopted and used in the teaching of English after adaptation to the Emirati context. On the contrary, if said resources and methodologies are seen as a negative influence on the teaching and learning of Arabic, then English resources are developed to parallel those currently utilized in Arabic but with UAE contexts. Either way, the problem I believe, does not lie with the languages, but in the strong differentiation between mother tongue, second language and the mechanisms, methodologies and resources accepted and used in the teaching and learning of languages in the UAE.

Paradoxically, and while Arabic should be significantly improved as perceived from the findings of this research, English is being given more importance in schools and higher education, a fact that is highly debatable by academics in the UAE. As of 2011, all public schools in Abu Dhabi have turned to teaching Mathematics and Science subjects in English, leaving the Arabic language only to be taught as a language for Islamic studies and social studies. In addition, parents perceive that English has a high value in the job market. These factors, I believe give the perception that English is a high status language and Arabic is at a disadvantage. I think this implies that the balance and proportions of both languages is questionable and that Arabic in its current scope will not develop competent Arabic speaking Emiratis.

I believe that based on the above, English as a language is not the main culprit for displacing the Arabic language but rather that many elements come into play when

analysing some of the challenges. Firstly, the methodologies, resources and teacher training and qualifications for teaching Arabic are by far not as attractive, engaging or professional as the ones used to teach English. Secondly, the Arabic language status within the UAE is not given its due respect and is over ridden by English. For example, English is the medium of instruction for Science and Math in schools and English is the medium of instruction in universities. Thirdly, the widespread use of different technologies such as the internet, the media, etc. that are all in English makes the language a necessity for the pursuit of knowledge.

There was also a widespread perception that the increasing use of the English language in schools and universities is also to blame for their dissatisfaction with the current status of Arabic. This was proven by participants by stating that they are a minority in their own homeland and that English dominates all spheres of their daily life: education in schools and universities, the work place, media, health, entertainment, social network, etc., to the extent that due to societal pressures, Emirati monolinguals are stereotyped as uneducated. Therefore, and according to their perception, they are obliged to use English much more than Arabic.

We are thus witnessing a situation where English is not an additional language but a dominant language in UAE society. We are faced with a culture clash because the Emiratis are becoming too familiar with the additional culture. English is still taught as a subject explicitly, i.e. grammar, vocabulary and various other elements of the language in addition to being the language of instruction in schools for mathematics and science and for all subjects in higher education. (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4). Another major finding of this research was the stance of participants over the claim that English is overriding Arabic which is also supported by academics in the above press releases. Although participants revealed frustration and discontent regarding the situation of Arabic in their personal and public linguistic environment, they had stereotypical notions about Emiratis who were not proficient in English or saw Arabic monolinguals as being uneducated. This was supported by participant number two who stated that because everything was in English if one does not master English he is labelled as 'backward' (reference Ptp/30) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.3.4). An

education professor in a press release also stated that Arabic monolinguals are viewed as uneducated (Constantive & Al Lawadi, 2007).

Another controversial issue emerging from this research was the disconnection between the Government's official declared language policy and the actual linguistic pattern implemented in the country. Participant one said that everywhere English is spoken in the UAE and more important even in government entities all forms and means of communication are in English. He said 'When I go to places the Arabic language is cancelled' (reference Ptp/84) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.4), although the UAE constitution clearly states that the UAE is an Arab Muslim country and the Arabic language is the language of the nation (Al Baik, 2008) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2). In addition, the Emirati government had announced in March 2008 that the Arabic language is the official language in all federal authorities and establishments. This move has been greatly appreciated by prominent UAE intellectuals such as Dr. Ebtisam Al Kitbi, who in 2008 said that the move was long overdue and that it was a step in the right direction to emphasize national identity (see Chapter 1, sub-section 1.1). Furthermore, the ruler of Dubai stated that an institute for the Arabic Language was established to address the concern of the status of Arabic and in order to reaffirm that the Arabic language should occupy priority in the educational system (Emirates24/7) (see Chapter 2, sub-section 2.5).

Therefore, by revealing the controversies between language policy, the actual implementation and concepts of my participants, this research has the potential in informing decision makers as to the complexities of language subtleties actually taking place in the UAE. Data supported the latter claim because participant four made the connection between the Arabic language and Islam by saying that the decision-makers and academics who are responsible for education in general in UAE and language education in particular, should develop the Arabic language and the Islamic education to make it more attractive to children, which is not the current situation (reference Ptp/16) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.1).

The probable meanings of the three findings can be better comprehended when investigated in the broader context of language teaching policy in the UAE and globally.

5.2.1 Finding # 1: Language Ideologies

Language beliefs or ideologies are what people believe they should do, i.e. the language they should speak, but this does not necessarily translate into their actual language choices (Spolsky, 2004) (see Chapter 2, sub-section 2.5). Interview data analysis revealed that my participants believed that as long as they read the Holy Koran, the Arabic language will never be endangered because it comes from within them, and that speaking Arabic means speaking the language of the Holy Koran, as stated by participant one, (reference Ptp/88 and Ptp/50) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.1). Three other similar examples were given such as the one stated by participant number seven, who stated that Arabic is the language of the Koran, (reference Ptp/6) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, section 4.2.1). Participant number two explained that she thanks God for Arabic because she ponders in Arabic', (reference Ptp/8) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.1) and participant number eight said that they should master Arabic because it is the language of the Koran, (reference Ptp/6) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.1). In addition, one participant stated that Islam and the Holy Koran cannot die, and thus its associated language will hold strong forever (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.1). Participant number two believed she was sinful, and asked God for forgiveness because she only spoke Arabic while praying (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.1).

However, and contrary to the above, we find also many references to the pessimistic outlook of my participants regarding the future of the Arabic language in their country which will be 'deleted' (reference Ptp/59) (see Appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.2). One participant stated that Arabic will 'vanish', and another said the Arabic language is 'destroyed' (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.2). Talking about Arabic in the universities, participant six explained and wondered about the paradox that English courses are given in universities but not Arabic (reference Ptp/13) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.4).

Another participant blamed herself and others and said that they are all abandoning the Arabic language and it has come to reach a level where she cannot make one sentence in

Arabic, which makes her really angry at herself (reference Ptp/87) (see Appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.2).

The instances cited above indicate that my participants had contradictory views regarding the future of Arabic in their country. This inconsistency may be due to either their Islamic ideology that Arabic is associated with the Holy Koran and thus will never fade away; or that English is overriding Arabic because of globalization and the demographic imbalance (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.1). I wish to argue here that this demographic imbalance is likely to conceal many ramifications not only on languages but may also have social, cultural and ideological implications. I believe that the main reasons for this demographic imbalance are due to the small number of nationals and the need for an expatriate labour force to help in building the nation (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.2).

5.2.2 Finding # 2 Language Practice

The Data suggest that Emiratis perceive English to have a high value in the job market besides being a status symbol, while Arabic is not used because it has no paybacks. Supporting the latter, participant number one stated that Arabic is not used due to its lack of benefits (reference Ptp/84) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.4).

Another pertinent point to the above discussion is the language domains in the UAE because, as Wei (1994, p. 2) explains, language choice is an ‘act of identity’. Findings indicated Emiratis chose to speak Arabic with nuclear family for several reasons; Arabic was their first language, it was their mother tongue, and because they were Arabs and out of respect to their culture (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2). However, Emiratis chose to speak English in their work place and in educational settings because it was easier for them, or due to the absence of an easy Arabic equivalent to technical words such as ‘hard disc’ or ‘blue tooth’ (reference Ptp/13) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.2).

In spite of my participants’ linguistic ideologies towards their mother-tongue as exemplified above, there sometimes is a controversy between their actual practice and their beliefs. Parents perceive English as having a high value in the job market, and one

participant stated that Arabic is not used because of its lack of benefit (reference Ptp/84) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.4). In addition, Emiratis who do not master the English language are labelled as un-educated.

The above point precisely indicates the societal pressure put on them by themselves, i.e. Emiratis towards Emiratis. Moreover, a linguistic scholar warned in 2007 that if Emiratis do not master English they are considered 'illiterate' (Constantive & Al Lawati, 2007) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.4). Another academic said in a press release that apparently Arabic is increasingly taking a backseat to English and that English is one of the causes of the current poor Arabic status in the UAE (Pennington, 2015) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.2). In addition, the same academic states that while language policy makers are exerting much effort to develop the English language, Arabic proficiency is paying the price (*ibid.*) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.4).

Participants exhibited frustration and disappointment at the lack of Arabic around them. However, the data analysis indicated that, in spite of their disappointment, they still chose English in many different domains. Participants chose to speak Arabic with the nuclear family for several reasons: Because Arabic was their first language, or because 'it is our mother tongue', or out of respect for their culture or because they were 'Arabs' (reference Ptp1/LD2) (see appendix 4) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.3.2). However, the participant who chose Arabic out of respect to his culture also stated that English was easier for him to express his daily communication and feelings. Visual and auditory media was also a domain where my participants showed different preferences: Two chose both Arabic and English; two chose English only; and one chose Arabic (reference Ptp4/LD2 and LD4, and Ptp5/LD2) (see Appendix 4) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.3.4). When it came to language choice in education and the workplace, most participants demonstrated their discontent for having to speak English compulsorily in their own Arab country (reference Ptp/p22) (see Appendix 5b) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.1).

Finally, and as I am bilingual, during the interviews I left the language choice to my participants (see Chapter 3, sub-section 3.3.2). All eight participants code switched between English and Arabic. It was interesting to notice that their code switching was

because the Arabic word or thought was not readily available in their minds. This clearly indicates that my participants mastered and used English more than Arabic (reference Ptp/87) (see Appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.2).

5.2.3 Finding # 3: Linguistic Landscape

As we saw in Chapter 4 (sub-section 4.1.1), in the UAE, English is the medium of instruction in higher education, and schools teach Mathematics and Science in English. Arabic is only taught as a language and a medium of instruction in schools for Islam and Social Studies subjects, ‘Arabic being displaced by English’ (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.4). Analysis of interviews released in the press also indicated that Arabic was not given due respect in universities where English is the medium of instruction, (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.1)

Another interesting notion which is relevant to this discussion is the linguistic landscape. Landry and Bourhis (1997) term the notion of language choice in public space as linguistic landscape (LL). This refers to the visible presence of certain language objects such as street signs, billboards, road signs, etc. that brand the public space (reference Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.3). The language choices on a linguistic landscape reveal the ethnolinguistic vitality of the community or country (ibid.). This concept is germane in this research. (reference Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.3).

While viewing English only direction signs in a university, one participant blamed the university and said that we must ‘concentrate’ on Arabic and give it importance (reference Ptp/p21) (see appendix 5b) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.3). Another participant blamed the university and said that they had ‘spoiled’ (sic) everything by placing English only signs, (reference Ptp/p.23) (appendix 5b) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.3). One more participant associated her nieces’ poor Arabic level to such artefacts, (reference Ptp/p22) (appendix 5b) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.3). The same participant claimed that the university means to state with such signs that Arabic is not important (reference Ptp/p21) (appendix 5b) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.3). She added that even in major restaurants, menus are only in English and Arabic is missing, she remarked that perhaps that means if she cannot read or speak English in such

restaurants or coffee shops she does not eat (reference Ptp/20) (appendix 5b) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.3.4).

All these examples show the frustration and disappointment of my participants towards the lack of Arabic and the dominance of English in their environment.

Participant two associated the demographic imbalance with having bilingual Arabic/English road signs (reference Ptp/p17) (see appendix 5b) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.3). Participant number three associated the bilingual new parking signs to the fact that the UAE now has too many foreigners (reference Ptp/p17) (see appendix 5b) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.3). On a follow-up questions of how it made her feel, she replied that sometimes she does not feel like she is in her own country and wishes one day all the signs would be in Arabic once all the non-Arabic speaking foreigners have left the country. She accounted for the two languages on the sign as being that they have too many foreigners, and that they were a young nation with a very small population of nationals (reference Ptp/p16) (see appendix 5b) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.3).

The bilingual public street signs were taken differently as my participants remarked on both Arabic and English languages. These were viewed positively by participant three claiming that the government is being sensitive to the many non-Arabic expatriates living in the country (reference Ptp/p30) (see appendix 5b) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.3).

However, and as Tan (2014) states, the linguistic landscape of a society should not be taken as an inert echo of the dominant language, but rather as a tool of confirming the supremacy or fame of a certain language (ibid., p. 440). (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.3). Another significant point to this research is that the linguistic landscape also assumes a convincing role and does affect the peoples' acceptance of the government language policies (ibid., p. 457). This notion is confirmed by my data analysis because while some of my participants viewed negatively the university monolingual English only signs as an attempt to demean their Arabic language, they applaud the Government's bilingual street signs (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.3).

If this be true, then having English only signs in universities indicates that English is dominant, and that it is the language of supremacy in the total absence of Arabic in higher education. Bilingual signs in public spaces indicate that English does have an equal place with Arabic according to government language policy, although Arabic came first and was followed by its English translation. It also shows the Emiratis' acceptance of the state's language policy. We should not forget that the UAE is an Arab country (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.3).

I believe that the above factors give the perception that English is a high status language and Arabic is at a disadvantage. This implies that the balance and proportions of both languages is questionable, and that Arabic in its current state will not develop Emiratis who are proficient in the Arabic language. My belief is supported by participant number four, who said her Arabic was better in school but once she enrolled in university English became overriding (reference Ptp/12) (see appendix 5a) (Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.2).

Pertinent to this research, I have noticed that my participants appropriate their social identities and thus their linguistic actions and attitudes, based on the context. All my eight participants chose to speak Arabic within their own family context and justified it by saying it is out of respect to the family members. Therefore, and in this instance, they enacted the role of respectful children within their family context. However, assuming a different role, that of a student in the university, they chose to speak English as it was easier for them and because English was the medium of instruction in higher education. This confirms that my participants changed their values and emotional significance affiliated from being members of the first group within the family context, to members of another group, i.e. the educational context.

5.2.4 Finding # 4: Language Policy

Arabic is not only a language that should be used for communication in the UAE but is also the language used by Muslims to pray and read the Holy Koran. Analysis of interviews and interviews released in the press indicated that because Arabic is strongly associated with Islam and the readings of the Holy Koran, it is always safeguarded and

can never go away (see Chapter 4, section 4.2, appendix 5a). However, and paradoxically, data analysis also revealed concerns about the loss of the Arabic language and the negative influences of English and globalization on their Emirati identity. Although participants agree that learning English has undeniable benefits, they are against adopting the values of ‘Western’ culture (see Chapter 4, section 4.2 and 4.3 (see appendices 5a and 5b).

In addition, findings suggest that the future of Arabic will take a more diminutive status as perceived by participants. Findings in Chapter 4 indicate a paradox of participants’ perception towards English and Arabic use in their country. This research finding may suggest that Emiratis feel that EIL will overtake Arabic (their mother-tongue) in the future. In addition, and because Emiratis are a minority in their own homeland, they might believe that the influx of non-Arabic speakers may force them to forsake speaking the Arabic language.

Referring to the fact that most literature is published in English, I agree that much is released in English or arguably more readily translated into English above other languages. Therefore, this justifies why the Emirati student/reader should be proficient in English.

Emiratis are obliged to speak to people from other cultures, e.g. EIL teachers, expatriates, etc., which may cause problems, especially for women who are Muslims and are not used to speaking openly with male teachers. On the other hand, male EIL students may feel they have to be more open and speak, argue and debate when faced with a foreign teacher who may be from a different culture and religion and who introduces unfamiliar concepts and issues.

Moreover, Emiratis, being Arab Muslims, are discontented with having to use English as a lingua franca in their daily lives. Results of this research clearly indicate that English is used in education, media, public space and daily communication and that English is extensively overriding Arabic (see Chapter 4, section 4.2.4, 4.3.4, 4.3.4, 4.4.1, 4.4.2, 4.4.3). However, findings suggest that learning English gave Emiratis the tools to acquire knowledge, for example through the Internet, reading English books and

conversing with expatriates which enhance business (reference Ptp/69) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, section 4.2.4).

This section has highlighted the main findings of this research and how the Emirati participants of this research have a rather debatable view about the topics under investigation. This paradox, I believe is due to the fact that their perceptions are socially constructed and thus are always changing according to social contexts.

The next section will discuss some of the unexpected outcomes of this study, and comment on how some helped crystallize the issues under discussion.

5.3 Unexpected Outcomes

The study yielded a number of unexpected outcomes. These were the addition of English as a medium of instruction in higher education.

5.3.1 English as a Medium of Instruction in Education

One unforeseen topic that was added to my literature review was English as a medium of instruction in education (see Chapter 2, sub-section 2.5). English as a medium in schools and higher education had significant impact on my data analysis in general, and specifically in interpreting my arguments in this research. The literature review was relatively controversial while debating this argument. Proponents and opponents both had convincing justifications, yet the UAE context is unique due to its demography. The UAE currently relies mostly on expatriates in many fields, such as in education (both in schools and universities), health, economy, etc. Yet, in the near future, the UAE needs to build a base of solid educated global Emirati citizens who are able to move the country forward. The government needs to develop a nation that can rely on its own nationals to stand firm among other first world countries.

Moreover, when I started my research, I was looking into the UAE language learning in the curriculum, especially the English language and how the Emirati students conceptualize the relationship between social identity and the English language. Then I investigated language use in: The media; in public space; and interviewed Emirati students studying in a foreign university in order to understand and interpret their

concepts towards learning English. I then examined interviews with education experts and academic professors released in the press. These interviews discussed the issue under investigation and gave comments and arguments by academics in the field of language education. They also debated heavily the topic of whether having English as a lingua franca seriously affects negatively on the Emirati language (Arabic), identity and culture. Finally, I came back to the importance and impact of schools and higher education curriculum and pedagogies.

5.3.2 Difficulty of Participants' Access and Data Analysis

In addition, the study yielded the difficulty of accessing participants. Firstly, it was hard to find participants. I tried approaching the first foreign university and after obtaining consent from the university head I distributed signs requesting volunteers for my research with no success. Then I gave a 15 minute talk to a group of Emirati students explaining my research and its significance in language policy within the UAE, but still none were interested. After this, I realized I had to change and find another university. I went to the French Sorbonne University in Abu Dhabi and was able to obtain eight Emirati participants, four males and females who were interested in my research topic. Yet because my data collection and analysis was spiral, I often needed to go back to my participants for further interviews and probing. The UAE being a relatively rich country, nationals find it easy to undertake frequent international travel either for business or leisure. This made my data collection a very time consuming process, as I had to wait, sometimes for months, to follow up with my participants. In addition, I always went back to my participants to present them with the data to confirm there were no ambiguities in interpreting their words and feelings.

I transcribed, translated and analysed my participants' interview transcripts while at the same time doing my document analysis. Using pictures as prompts during my second round of interviews helped me get a deeper understanding of my participants' perspectives regarding both the Arabic and English languages. Viewing the pictures and discussing them, my participants had plenty of focused time to contemplate and express their feelings and attitudes (reference Chapters 4). It is worth noting here that these perspectives may all have been socially constructed.

This section has summarized some of the unexpected outcomes of this research. Firstly, the debatable issue of having English as a medium of instruction in schools and higher education was added to the literature and constituted a significant topic to this research. Secondly, the difficulty of accessing participants from the initial and during the data analysis phase was discussed. The coming section will highlight my contribution to knowledge and how this research has given theoretical and practical proposals that will lead to better understanding of the relation between social identity and the learning/teaching of English.

5.4 Summary of Chapter 5

This chapter has summarized some of the main findings of this research. The need and benefits of learning English were undeniable due to the influx of expatriates in the UAE and at a time of globalization. English was perceived as a gateway to high income jobs and a key to knowledge and education. On the other hand, Arabic was not seen as a prestigious language and is not prevailing because of its limited benefit.

Another significant finding was that English was used far more in many domains including education, business, media, public landscapes, etc. However, there was fear that English would override Arabic and would have a negative influence on the Emirati identity. Findings also revealed a gap between the intentions and practice of government language policy.

My study is of importance in that it shows that although English is important in response to market needs at a time of globalization, yet due attention must be given to native Arabic speakers in the UAE where Arabic is demoted as non-useful.

I have also given in this chapter some corresponding and contrasting views between what I reviewed in the body of literature and my findings. It was interesting that my findings contrasted, to a certain extent, with Phillipson's (1992) theory of linguistic and cultural imperialism. Findings concurred and aligned with Pennycook (1998) and Canagarajah (1999) on how the English language is used within the UAE. Another important finding was that Emiratis Arabic monolinguals were labelled, strangely

enough by Emiratis, as being un-educated and categorized those who did not master English as belonging to a different group with whom they have no common traits.

In my final chapter (Chapter 6) I will discuss the implications of this research for the policy and practice of language education in the UAE. It will suggest recommendations for language policy stakeholders in the UAE for achieving a more balanced Arabic/English language education system.

CHAPTER 6: IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Introduction to Chapter 6

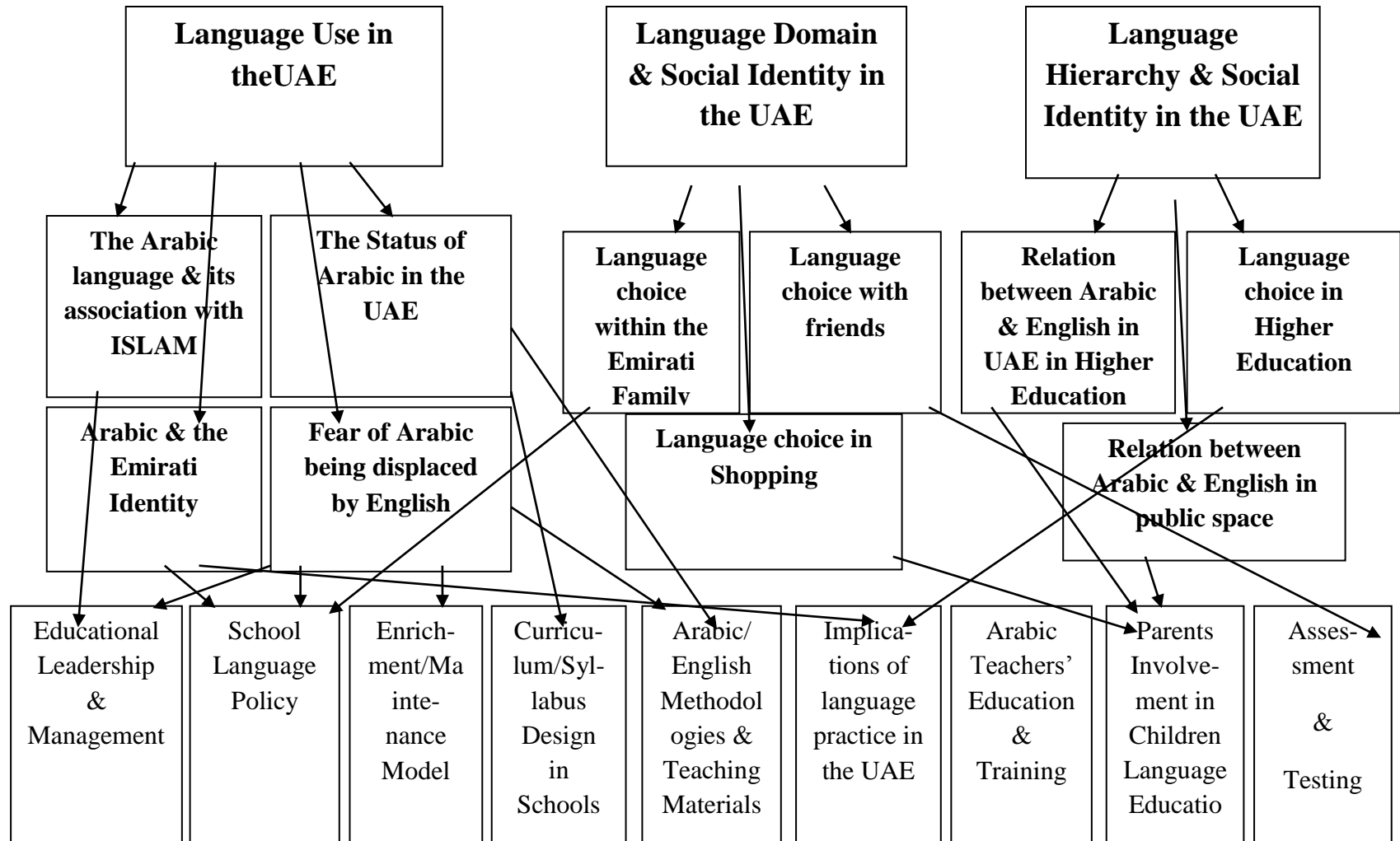
In this final chapter I will propose some recommendations for the main stakeholders responsible for language policy planning in the UAE. I will go on to acknowledge some limitations of this research, and make some brief proposals for future studies in this field. Finally, I will then share some reflective views about what I learned through this research journey and how it has impacted on both my professional and personal self.

6.2. Implications for the Language Policy in the UAE

The findings of my research (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.4) suggest that English is a factor contributing to the poor Arabic standards; however, my personal interpretation is that it is not the English language itself but the indirect/peripheral factors associated with the country and the language education system that may also have an impact.

6.2.1 Leadership and management

Findings of my research (Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.4) suggest that the Arabic language teachers' skills should be enhanced to reflect the most up-to-date standards. In conjunction with the Emiratization body, the hiring policy for principles and head teachers should encourage more Emiratis to take up managerial posts in the education sector. In addition, the current foreign teachers are brought into the country for professional reasons that are sometimes financially driven and thus are ineffective in accomplishing their basic role in skills transfer.



A question which is germane to this discussion is whether English is being taught in the UAE within a context of a monolingual country with additional English or within a bilingual framework. Poor standards in the mother tongue are arguably not a direct effect of introducing a second language, or more specifically 'English'. More so the standards of teaching and learning at the point that the second language is introduced should be questioned. I do not view the English language itself as the cause of the perceived problem rather than the factors associated with it: for example the education system whereby English is the medium of instruction in higher education and for Mathematics and Science in schools; in the media, in advertisement and in public space, how English is handled and the differential on emphasis of importance between Arabic and English. I argue here that when English is taught in the classrooms it should be viewed within a broader sense. We should simultaneously take into consideration English language learning through the media, the internet, and public space (language landscape), etc. English language in classroom practice and pedagogy should be planned bearing in mind other influential factors that do affect the language learner. I believe there should be an integrated language policy within the UAE that would cater for all these different elements.

6.2.2 School language policy

The findings of my research (Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.1) also suggest that the current education system in the UAE is not a true bilingual model. There is a clear polarization between English and Arabic. There must be a language balance in the curriculum and in the school language policy. The current situation does create a language problem as students do build associations between the languages (English vs. Arabic) and the subject matter. Therefore, most subjects should be taught first in Arabic in the early stages of learning as exemplified by the data. Participant seven commented on the dominance of English and absence of Arabic in schools and stated that Arabic must be the first language. The mother-tongue in schools should be the basic language, students should learn Arabic first then English which is not the current status (reference Ptp/22) (see appendix 5a). In addition, participant number three stated that school graduates, even Arabs, speak only English and not Arabic. He said that he blamed both schools and universities for the low Arabic proficiency (reference Ptp/14) (see appendix 5a).

In addition, participant number eight voiced his concern and stated that the UAE language policy is currently facing a big problem and thus needs a big solution. He suggested that the language policy must change and that English should not be introduced in early stages of learning and that Arabic must be given priority (reference Ptp/13) (see appendix 5a). At the same time, participant number four confirmed that the education system in schools must be modified (reference Ptp/9) (appendix 5a). She also stated that previously the schools used to focus on the Arabic language but not anymore (reference Ptp/10) (see appendix 5a).

The above is also supported by the literature review concerning introducing English at an early stage of learning in general and in UAE specifically. Fanon (1991, p.18) states that learning a language (in this case English) is simultaneously assuming its culture. The UNESCO (2000, p.76) report confirms that education in the mother-tongue strengthens cultural identity and heritage. Especially within the context of UAE, Findlow (2006, p. 21) asks whether English should be so dominant in a country where the Arabic language is degraded, is being looked at as 'non-useful' and the Arabic culture is posited as the 'other'. Another UNESCO report (2010) stated that the UAE needs to establish a curriculum that would represent the goals and aspirations of the country, endorse national identity and reflect the Emirati local environment.

I believe officials responsible for language policy in the UAE should stipulate the explicit teaching of Arabic for a couple of years starting in primary stages, and then introduce English. This would be followed by an emergent model which would achieve language integrated learning in some form. For example, in Brunei they do value English, yet they are making sure that language learners do not experience conflict with their own national language and culture while at the same time becoming literate and proficient in English. The Brunei example in language teaching is a good model as they are running a bilingual education system and research is currently being undertaken to make it work better. I particularly gave the example of Brunei because although it is not an Arab country, yet it is a Muslim nation and Arabic is closely associated with Islam.

In addition, the native English language teachers (ELT) are skilled professionals but do not take into consideration the home culture in their methodological approaches of

teaching, but rather are culturally biased towards their own ‘Western’ culture. This could be balanced by equipping Emirati teachers to teach English. Moreover, Arabic teachers need to become more qualified and apply the latest innovations in pedagogy, i.e. context based pedagogies in order to compete with the ‘Western’ teachers. With regards to the early learners (KG1, and KG2), learning through play should be more emphasized especially while learning Arabic. In addition, more incentives should be offered to Arabic Emirati teachers to be sufficiently trained in order to develop a local ‘training’ body that can offer workshops and seminars in Arabic instead of hiring foreign training companies. As mentioned in Chapter 2, sub-section 2.5, implications of English as a medium of instruction in education may result in having college graduates become ‘drivers of language shift’ as they quickly use English in both the academic environment and social communication (Graddol, 1997, p. 10).

Furthermore, findings of my study (Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4) suggest that efforts to teach Arabic and English should be coordinated in order to avoid conflict and polarization. We should thus consider bilingual models of education. The current situation as evident from this study indicates that there is a kind of polarization in language teaching. In general, educators cannot really change the global hierarchy of language within a given country, but maybe this thesis can. Findings of this study also suggest that in the UAE we have a bilingual society which may not clearly be acknowledged in the curriculum. The curriculum may be emphasizing the difference between the two languages and the two perceived cultures. However, if it is all about perceptions, they can be negotiated; it is the influx of expatriates as previously mentioned in Chapter 2 that may have led to the latter.

Participants in this research expressed on several occasion how they felt towards ‘Western culture’ (reference Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.2 and 4.4.3), a perception which may only be their own social construct. It is not necessarily what the Westerners identify as their culture or that they recognize the language as Standard English. As expressed in this study by my participants, monolinguals are demeaned due to their lack of English language proficiency. We may be able to change this attitude by positively validating the Arabic language in textbooks and showing its importance. We should

replicate the coordination between the two languages. Science and mathematics should be taught in the two languages to enable school graduates to easily enter universities while at the same time giving due significance to the mother tongue. Therefore the education system should target a more integrated balanced curriculum.

This research found that what currently exists in the UAE is some form of bilingualism but at the same time some people who are monolinguals are being demeaned by their own nationals as ‘uneducated’ or ‘backward’. This was supported by participant number two who stated that because everything was in English if one does not master English he is labelled as ‘backward’ (reference Ptp/30) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.3.4). The same participant added that speaking English in public is considered being “snobbish”. She stated that she feels angry when Emiratis speak English thinking it is a sign of ‘development’ and ‘civilization’ (reference Ptp/29) (see appendix 5a). In an interview released in the press with an education professor the latter notion was also expressed. He said that Arabic monolinguals are viewed as uneducated (Constantive & Al Lawadi, 2007). Ideally, therefore, we should have an education system whereby all Emiratis are being taught Arabic in the early stages of education and then English is introduced at a later stage.

Bilingual education does not mean losing your own culture, which is associated with your own language, but that you are aware of the other culture, appreciate it and do not have negative feelings towards it. In order to achieve the latter, I recommend that we teach subject contents such as mathematics, science, art and history in Arabic in the first years of education, and then introduce English. The current perception in the UAE is not a balanced form of bilingualism, but rather a polarized form of bilingualism whereby English is being taught much more than Arabic. As mentioned in Chapter 2, sub-section 2.5, implications of English as a medium of instruction in higher education may result in having college graduates becoming ‘drivers of language shift’ as they quickly use English in both the academic environment and social communication (Graddol, 1997, p. 10).

6.2.3 Curriculum/syllabus design in schools

As we saw in the statements of my interviewees (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.2) a balance in the curriculum between Arabic and English is significantly missing. Students in schools receive more subjects taught in English than in Arabic. While Arabic is only taught as a language, and a language of instruction for social and Islamic studies, English is taught as a language and as a medium of instruction for Mathematics and Science. This entails that students do not receive the latter subjects in their mother-tongue which does not only lessen the importance of Arabic but has negative ramifications for the future. Students entering higher education will not know these subject contexts in Arabic while they are Arab Emirati citizens. For example, the UNESCO report emphasized the need to establish in the UAE a national curriculum that would reflect the aims, aspirations of the community, manage Emirati's local environment and promote national identity. This was clearly shown by data. The following participants of this research clearly indicated their rejection of having English as a medium of instruction in schools.

As revealed in the data (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.2), and in response to a direct question as to who was responsible for the current status of Arabic in the UAE, participant two answered 'the schools' (reference Ptp/101) (see appendix 5a). Confirming the latter, participant four explained that when children go to schools, their Arabic language is 'destroyed' adding that Science and Mathematics are now even taught in English thereby questioning the absence of the Arabic language (reference Ptp/5) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.2). In addition, participant seven said that the Arabic language must first be taught in schools and then English should be introduced. He explained that this was not the current status (reference Ptp/22) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.2). Moreover, the data also revealed that the UAE is currently facing a huge problem and thus needs a huge solution and expressed the belief that the language problem should first be solved in schools. For example, participant number eight said that he hoped decision makers would do something about it because the Arabic language is going to 'vanish' (reference Ptp/13) (see appendix 5a), and he directly blamed policy decision makers for the misbalance of languages in the UAE and the effect it has on the Emirati identity. He added that

English should be taught as a second language and only used when Emiratis come in contact with non-Arab speaking foreigners (Reference Ptp/13) (see appendix 5a) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.2). While participant two said ‘... we are all abandoning the Arabic language’ (reference Ptp/52) (see appendix 5a), and then continued ‘... it is impossible to make one sentence at all in Arabic ... this is very big ... it makes me angry’ (reference P/87) (see Appendix 5a). Talking about Arabic, the same participant said ‘I feel it is vanishing’ (Ptp/79) (see appendix 5a). Participant four also commented on the status of Arabic: ‘Arabic language is destroyed’ (reference Ptp/5) (see appendix 5a).

I believe that efforts to teach Arabic and English should be coordinated in order to avoid conflict and polarization. We should consider bilingual models of education. The current situation as evident from this study indicates that there is a kind of polarization in language teaching. In general, educators cannot really change the global hierarchy of language within a given country, but maybe this thesis can. Findings of this study suggest that in the UAE we have a bilingual society which may not clearly be acknowledged in the curriculum. The curriculum may be emphasizing the difference between the two languages and the two perceived cultures. However, it is all about perceptions, and they can be negotiated; it is the influx of expatriates as previously mentioned in Chapter 2 that may have led to the latter. Participants in this research expressed on several occasion how they felt towards ‘Western culture’, (see Chapter 4 and 6), a perception which may only be their own social construct. It is not necessarily what the westerners identify as their culture or that they recognize the language as Standard English. As expressed in this study by my participants, monolinguals are demeaned due to their lack of English language proficiency. We may be able to change this attitude by positively validating the Arabic language in textbooks and showing its importance.

This issue above was covered by senior Arabic curriculum designers and detailed in Chapter 4 of Data Analysis – interviews. We should replicate the coordination between the two languages. Science and mathematics should be taught in the two languages to enable school graduates to easily enter universities while at the same time giving due

significance to the mother-tongue. Therefore the education system should target a more integrated balanced curriculum.

6.2.4 Arabic/English methodologies and teaching materials

One of the themes that emerge clearly from my data analysis was the reasons given for the low proficiency of the Arabic language (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.4). Moreover, and associating English to be one of the main causes of the current poor Arabic status, one academic expressed his view in an interview released in the press that because students are over-exposed to English with its bright vivid books and resources together with its stimulating methodologies, interest in Arabic may very well diminish. Agreeing with this view, another academic professor also in an interview released in the press said that although education administrators want to make all efforts so that students develop their English skills, “... but Arabic proficiency is suffering as a result” (Pennington, 2015).

One of the two Senior Arabic curriculum designers in an interview stated that students are not motivated to learn Arabic because Arabic teachers are not as qualified as their counterpart English or French teachers (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.1). Another justification was that Arabic is not given due respect in universities because English is the medium of instruction in all higher education institutes (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.1).

According to the statements of interviews, (reference Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.1) (reference Ptp/14) (see appendix 5a) all English language teaching materials, Mathematics and Science books have been written mainly by either American or British writers. They reflect the Anglophone Western culture whether in texts, context or pictures. What are needed are textbooks that are written by Arabs/Emiratis that would reflect the local reality, the Emirati and/or Arab cultures, and heritage. These books would contain images, reading texts, discussion tasks to reflect the latter. Such books would also have some elements of the Western culture thus encouraging understanding of diversity. For example, in my data, participant number three expressed her sadness

about the Arabic language in schools saying that Arabic is not cared about and that all importance is given to English.

6.2.5 Implications for the Practice of Language teaching in the UAE

The Data obtained in my study revealed some inconsistencies between the official government language policy and the actual practice of language in the UAE. In March 2008, the UAE announced that it was the year of ‘National Identity and Arabic Language’ and that Arabic is the official language in all federal authorities and establishments. Moreover, a senior Emirati academic stated that the move was long overdue in order to preserve the Emirati national identity. In addition, and by official decree, the UAE constitution clearly states that Arabic is the official language of the country, (see Chapter 1, Introduction) (Al Baik, 2008).

In addition, several intellectuals and prominent figures in the UAE often voice concern as to what are the proper mechanisms to activate Emirati identity. Dr. Ameenah Al Daheri, Associate Professor at the UAE University, explains, ‘Nationals are concerned about their identity because they are a minority in their homeland’ (see Chapter 1, Introduction) (Gulf News, 2008). Language policy in the UAE is a major concern to the rulers of the nation and in 2008 His Highness Sheikh Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Minister of Presidential Affairs made the following remarks:

‘Our adherence to the national and indigenous traditions which are rooted in Islamic and Arab values and traditions does not in any way mean that the UAE is parting with the values and constructive interactions of the modern world. We seek to further consolidate the reconciliatory integration between our national identity on the one hand and our connection and belonging to our Arab and international character’ (see Chapter 1, Introduction) (Emirates News Agency, WAM, 2008).

As we can see from the above, the officially announced government position is that Arabic is the official language of the nation and is to be used in all federal entities. However, as the following analysis will show, Arabic has taken a back seat in the linguistic reality of the UAE, in schools, universities and public space.

6.2.6 Arabic teachers' training

The Findings of my study indicate that some of the main challenges for Arabic to be learned and used in schools and universities, besides the lack of students' motivation, was the absence of qualified Arabic teachers, and in addition, to the old teaching methodologies for teaching Arabic as expressed by one academic professor in an interview released in the press (reference Sherif, 2012) (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4.2). He also stated that Arabic teachers should be trained to recognize themselves as being as significant as their English counterparts. They must practice reflective thinking in their teaching approaches and should continuously receive professional development training workshops, locally and internationally. Their exposure to diverse educational paradigms will bear fruitful outcomes in their teaching. There is a strong need to enhance Arabic teachers to enable them compete with their English teacher counterparts.

I personally believe that this may reflect more the opinion and perception of the educators than the actual state of affairs. Indeed if these elements be true, then this raises the issue regarding the state of Arabic teaching resources and whether there is a need to develop materials and methodologies to parallel those adopted and used in the teaching of English after adaptation to the Emirati context. This would also entail up to date Arabic teachers training and professional development to compete with their counterpart English teachers. The problem I believe, does not lie with the languages, but in the strong differentiation between mother tongue, second language and the mechanisms, methodologies and resources accepted and used in the teaching and learning of languages in the UAE.

6.2.7 Parents' involvement in children's language education

As mentioned above under sub-section 6.2.2, research findings of my study and interviews released in the press by academic professors indicate there is a need to educate parents, change their attitudes to appreciate the Arabic language and not demean it and term Arabic monolinguals as 'uneducated'. This may start with the school curriculum targeting young learners. Followed, maybe through public information campaigns, and the written and oral media. The latter could be maintained

through broadening the channels by which parents are informed of this approach. Continuous contact between school and parents through meeting, workshops, daily journals and the like would assist parents to see the benefits of the new approach and help their children in learning. In addition, the attitudes to monolinguals within the Emiratis' own country and that they are stereotyped as 'un-educated' or 'illiterate' indicates the great societal pressure to learn English. The parents' attitude towards Arabic also reflects on their children (Ahmed, 2012). This is a matter that, I believe, may be significantly true within the UAE, but not internationally.

This notion also has a significant impact on the parental involvement in their children's education in general and specifically in language education. When parents do not regard Arabic as a prestigious, important and beneficial language, then their children may be affected likewise. However, we should also note here that in a globalized world, Emirati parents may regard English as the gatekeeper to a promising lucrative career. Parents also aspire to their children being well informed, educated and that they have the tools, in this case English, to retrieve knowledge. Currently, and with the increasing importance of English in many fields such as science, health, education, economy, business, etc., Emiratis may rightly pursue English. In addition, and as explained earlier, English in the UAE is considered to be a status symbol.

6.2.8 Assessment/testing of English language

The research findings of my study (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.4) (reference Ptp/9 and Ptp/20) (see appendix 5a) indicate that participants blame universities for having English as a medium of instruction in universities thus giving much less importance to Arabic.

The TOEFL or IELTS tests are used as entrance examinations for higher education and in many work opportunities. If students do not obtain the required scores they are obliged either to redo the test or to enter a one year foundation course to study English. This emphasizes the extreme importance of mastering the English language. Equally, there should be an Arabic entrance test for higher education.

The Arabic test should be designed in a way that is appealing, modern, progressive and competitive to the current English tests. There is a great need for the Arabic language to be validated in higher education. The above proposal will lead to this validation as currently Arabic is almost missing in universities. The deterioration of students' Arabic level after they enter university was expressed by two participants.

6.3 Limitations of the study and direction for future research

I should stress that my study has been primarily concerned with the conceptualization of the ways in which Emirati students perceive the relationship between the social identity and the English language. As mentioned earlier, this was a qualitative interpretive interview study that investigated the following research question:

How do Emirati students conceptualize the relationship between social identity and the English language?

Unfortunately, the nature of my data does not allow me to generalize my findings. This study was conducted on a sample of eight Emirati students undertaking their postgraduate studies at the French Sorbonne University in Abu Dhabi, the UAE and two senior Arabic curriculum designers who are also Arabic teachers. A larger number of participants may have reflected different views and thus may have led to diverse results. Therefore, further studies need to be done to cover a bigger number of participants in order to receive more precise results and thus they may become generalizable. However, the study appears to support the argument for a change in the language policy of teaching English in the UAE. This study used interviews and interviews released in the media as the primary data collection methods.

Also missing from my participants' sample were government officials responsible for language policy planning in the UAE. This may have added a new dimension to the study. Understanding the criteria on which language policy is based and officials' perceptions to the issue would give a more integrated deeper understanding and analysis of the language policy implemented in the UAE. Further research may add some useful novel directions in discussing this issue.

Furthermore, English curriculum designers and English teachers could have been added to the sample to reflect another perception to the research. Comprehension of the ‘Western’ teaching community’s negotiation of their identities in the UAE and their understanding of the Emiratis language learners’ linguistic and cultural challenges would be important. This would harvest facts giving another deeper dimension to the topic under investigation. Thus, future researches need to cover all stakeholders involved, i.e. official government Arabic and English curriculum designers, Arabic and English teachers who implement the curriculum in the classrooms in order to get a more comprehensive and integrated true picture.

This research did not investigate the actual current situation of Arabic teachers’ professional training. This came as a significant point that emerged during the data analysis of interviews as show above. The Arabic teachers training was one of the issues to have had an impact on students’ lack of motivation to learn Arabic and consequently on the poor Arabic standards. Future research should cover this vital issue. Relevant to this domain is the examination of Arabic curriculum and resource materials. More research is needed to examine these resources and curriculum in order to make them compatible with their English equivalent.

Moreover, this study was conducted in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi and the UAE is comprised of seven Emirates. Abu Dhabi is the city capital of the UAE. Like most other city capitals, it is more developed than other areas of the country. It is worth investigating whether or not Emiratis of other regions have the same conceptualization of the relationship between the social identity and the English language.

I therefore suggest that further studies need to cover other Emirates that are more isolated and remote and thus may have their own unique linguistic contexts. This would result in a more integrated perspective of the language policy in the UAE in general. Including all the seven Emirates in the UAE may yield results that can be generalizable among countries of similar linguistic complexities.

The impact of the linguistic landscape on the results was an issue added at the final stage of this research. Future studies should put more emphasis from the beginning of

the research on the influence of the linguistic landscape on the beliefs and linguistic ideologies of Emiratis in the UAE. In adding the linguistic landscape analysis, in addition to the official learned forms of language, a novel aspect could yield useful results in investigating bilingualism.

On the other hand, several factors qualify this study for making significant contribution to knowledge because of its uniqueness. It investigates a topical issue and was undertaken within its social context. Moreover, the researcher and participants were of Arabic mother-tongue which gives credibility while undertaking interviews without any miscommunication due to language. Finally, this study focuses on the conceptualization of the relationship between social identity and the English language within a globalized context. The latter I do believe will make this study resonate more widely. This research will provide language policy makers with some guidelines regarding how to teach English and maintain the native language. This study may also enable other Arabic researchers to apply the same methodology in their future studies in order to get rich data in its natural setting. Thus this study will not only be useful within the UAE but also to other Gulf countries and elsewhere that may share a similar geographical imbalance and share the same issues with teaching English.

6.4 Reflections on my own professional and personal development

As a result of this study, I have come to recognize that I have learned, transformed and grown into a more knowledgeable person with a better comprehensive view of the world.

On both the professional and personal level, I have acquired several important skills. For example, I have become more self-reflective, analytical, and better at understanding myself and others. I have come to appreciate how people negotiate their multi-faceted identities based on their social identity beliefs and that most of our ideologies and attitudes are merely perceptions, and also that, with the exception of a few examples, there is no 'real' truth.

The more I delved into the body of knowledge, the more I realized that theorists and authors may be critically reviewed and sometimes proven wrong. That some well-

known theorists change their stance towards a certain issue over time or even contradict themselves and others. It was also interesting to monitor how the field of language teaching should change due to globalization; however the TESOL field did not change or move to parallel this change. It was evident from the literature that identity and language were not deeply researched in the past and that the association between language and identity is not fully exhausted even up until today.

I also found it tremendously rewarding that I have changed, for the better, in how I view the world and have come to appreciate more the differences between people. I have become more accepting of the ‘other’ and better in comprehending the complexities of an identity. In spite of the fact that I have come into this research with a vast diplomatic United Nations experience, after globalization, which has turned the world into a global village, this research journey has filled the gaps in my compassionate empathetic view of activities and individuals.

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Appendix 1 a.

Volunteers wanted (Arabic)

**مطلوب متطوعين إماراتيين للاشتراك في بحث حول الهوية
الإماراتية واللغة الإنجليزية**

إن البحث جزء من دكتوراة في التربية من جامعة باث بالمملكة المتحدة .
ويهدف إلى، استكشاف وشرح كيفية تعامل الطلاب الإماراتيين مع كل من اللغة
الإنجليزية - باعتبارها لغة عالمية – ومع الثقافة الغربية ، وكذلك فهم كيفية تحدث
هؤلاء الطلاب عن هويتهم وثقافتهم ولغتهم بعد تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية.

وسيتم التعامل مع جميع المعلومات والبيانات في سرية تامة وسوف تستخدم فقط
لأغراض هذا البحث بجامعة باث بالمملكة المتحدة

الباحثة

هي جيهان ابراهيم صادق ، وقد تعلمت في مدارس بالمملكة المتحدة وجمهورية مصر
العربية ، وكانت تشغل منصب مدير الإعلام بمنظمة الأمم المتحدة
للأطفال "اليونيسف" لأكثر من 25 عاما ثم مدير مركز اللغة الإنجليزية و
مدرس للغة الإنجليزية بجامعة نيويورك بأبوظبي لمدة 5 أعوام. وقد حصلت
علي شهادة البكالوريوس في الأدب الإنجليزي والترجمة من جامعة القاهرة ،
وعلى شهادة الماجستير في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية لغير الناطقين بها من
الجامعة الأمريكية بالشارقة .

المتطوعون

يحتاج البحث المنوه عنه لطلاب إماراتيين متطوعين (ذكور وإناث)
لإجراء مقابلات معهم كجزء من هذا البحث فإذا كنت مهتم وترغب في المساهمة في هذا
البحث، وتريد أن تعرف المزيد عنه أو عن الباحثة ، فيرجي الاتصال بها علي :

الهاتف المتحرك: 050 5414337

البريد الإلكتروني: gs270@bath.ac.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1.b

Volunteers wanted (English)

Emirati Students Volunteers Needed (males & females)

For a Ph.D Research

The Research

This research is registered with the Education Department at the University of Bath, United Kingdom. The rationale of this study is to explore and explain how the Emirati students engage with English as an international language and the Anglophone 'Western' culture. How they manage and talk about their identities, culture and language. All information and data will be treated as **Strictly Confidential** and will be anonymised and used ONLY for the purpose of this research.

The Researcher

GihaneSadek was educated in British and Egyptian language schools in Edinburgh, Scotland and Egypt. She was a UN Civil Servant and worked for more than 25 years for UNICEF. She received her BA in English Literature and Translation with honors from Cairo University, Egypt. Her MA is in Teaching English to Students of Other Languages (TESOL) from the American University of Sharjah, UAE and is currently undertaking her Ph.D degree at the University of Bath, United Kingdom. Gihane was the Director of the English Language Institute and later an English Instructor at NYIT, Abu Dhabi during the period 2005-2009.

The Volunteers

Emirati students' volunteers (males and females) are needed for interviewing as part of this research. If you are interested and wish to contribute in this issue, and want to know more about the study or the researcher, kindly contact me. Mob: 050 5414337 OR at gs270@bath.ac.uk

The Interview

The researcher is a fully balanced bilingual, so interviews can be held either **in Arabic** or **English**. Time of interview is approximately one hour. Place and schedule of interviews will be organized later.

Thank you.

Appendix 2

Arabic Interview Questions via email to Arabic Curriculum Designers

جزء من رسالة الدكتوراه في التربية من جامعة "بات" بالمملكة المتحدة

تعدده الباحثة : جيهان صادق

موضوع البحث

"استكشاف كيفية تعامل الطلاب الإماراتيين مع

اللغة الإنجليزية وتأثيرها على الهوية الإماراتية واللغة العربية"

ملاحظة : سيتم التعامل مع جميع المعلومات والبيانات في سرية تامة

وسوف تستخدم فقط لأغراض البحث بجامعة "بات" بالمملكة المتحدة .

أ) كيف يتعامل الطالب الإماراتي مع اللغة الإنجليزية عند تعلمها ؟

1 - كمعلم / معلمة للغة العربية كيف تري تعامل الطالب الإماراتي مع اللغة الإنجليزية ونظراته إليها ؟ ينظر إليها باعتبارها شرا لابد منه ، ولغزا تحله الصدفة في الامتحان أو يحله القائمون على الامتحان عبر طرح أسئلة تحمل الإجابة أكثر مما تطرح سؤولا .

2 - هل تظن أن هناك رابط بين اللغة والهوية؟

أقترح إعادة صياغة السؤال بحيث يكون : هل تظن أن اللغة مكون اساسي من مكونات الهوية ؟ أما الحديث عن مجرد وجود رابط فلا يستساغ

3 - كيف تري تأثير تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية علي الهوية الإماراتية؟

خطير جدا وإن كان غدا لبعض ناظره بعيد . !!!!!

4 - هل تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية شيء ضروري بالنسبة للطلاب الإماراتي؟

أكثر من ضروري ؛ ولكن دون تحميل اللغة العربية ما لا ناقة لها فيه ولا جمل

5- ما الذي يدفع الطالب الإماراتي إلى تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟

ما يدفعه إلى تعلم غيرها .

ب) ما هي التحديات التي تواجه الطالب الإماراتي عند تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة؟

- 1 - كيف تري التحديات التي تواجه الطالب الإماراتي عند تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟
- الوسط الذي يعيش فيه
- 2 - هل تتأثر اللغة العربية عند الطالب الإماراتي بعد تعلم اللغة الانجليزية وكيف ذلك ؟
- لا . إلا إذا كان تعلم الأولى على حساب الثانية
- 3 - هل أصبحت اللغة الإنجليزية "لغة عالميه ؟ وكيف ذلك ؟
- نعم .
- 4 - أين مكانة اللغة العربية الآن في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة؟
- مكانة المريض يشفق عليه أقرباؤه ؛ وكأن لسان حالهم يقول ما قالت أم صخر لعواد أبي صخر : (لا هو حي فيرجى ولا ميت فيستراح منه) .

ماهي تداعيات تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة؟

- 1 – ما هو تصورك لتعليم وتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية بعد عشر سنوات؟
- تعليم مسيطر وتعلم منتشر
- 2 - هل تظن أن تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية يغير من الطالب ؟
- طبعاً ، فباللغة يتم التفكير !!!!!
- وهل يغير ذلك من نظرتة للأشياء أو الأشخاص أو أحداث الحياة بشكل عام؟
- سينظر إلى الأشياء والأشخاص والأحداث إنجليزيا
- 4 - هل تعتقد أن الطالب الإماراتي قد يغير من بعض عاداته (الملبس – المأكـل...الخ) بعد تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية ؟ وكيف ذلك ؟
- عندما تتجذر اللغة في المجتمع فستنعكس سلوكا وعادات

Appendix 3

Interviews Transcripts

Interview with Senior Arabic Curriculum Designer (#1)

17 November 2011

ACD 1 = Arabic Curriculum Designer #1

ACD1, Answer 1 = ACD1/1

IQ1 = Interviewer question 1

IQ1: As an Arabic Curriculum Designer, how do you think the Emirati ESL student views the English language?

ACD1/1: He sees it as an international and modern language which represents civilization and prosperity. It guarantees for its speakers several economic and social gains and advantages.

IQ2: Do you believe there is a connection between language and identity?

ACD1/2: Yes language is an essential identity component of which may have a positive or negative effect on identity.

IQ3: How do you see the effect, if any, of the English language on the Emirati identity?

ACD1/3: If the Emirati student learns the English language without the acquisition of its culture, then this does not affect his identity. However, if he is totally immersed in its culture, including many aspects that violate the values and heritage of the UAE, then this may have a negative impact on the Emirati identity.

IQ4: Is learning English important to the Emirati student? Why?

ACD1/4: Yes, all modern knowledge is mostly written in English, like the internet and others. And all higher education degrees in the world are done in English. Besides most modern theories in science, mathematics and ideologies are in English. In addition, most social values glorify knowledge of English: Parents motivate their children to learn English and the labour market requires knowledge of English.

IQ5: How do you view the challenges of the faced by the Emirati student when learning English?

ACD1/5: The hardest of these challenges is that the Emirati student is lacking the environment to practice Arabic in his daily life.

APPENDICES

IQ6: Does the Emirati student Arabic language gets affected after learning English? How?

ACD1/6: It may be negatively affected if students find the use of English more entertaining than Arabic, especially when expressing their feelings or when discussing a certain issue. However, it may have a positive impact if the student invests in his intellectual awareness in viewing things.

IQ7: Do you think English has become a universal language?

ACD1/7: Yes. It is the first language in the United Nations and is the language of science, politics, economy, art and ideology.

IQ8: What is the status of the Arabic language currently in UAE?

ACD1/8: Officially, Arabic is the first language in UAE but according to some studies in comes third after English and Urdu.

IQ9: What are the implications of teaching and learning English in ten years from now?

ACD1/9: It will become better using advanced technologies.

IQ10: Do you think learning English changes the Emirati student? If it does, in what way?

ACD1/10: Yes because language is a tool of thought. So when we learn a language we learn how the owners of this language think. Therefore, your view of things changes after learning a new language because in acquiring it you also acquired new ways of thinking. Let's give an example: You may have a negative attitude towards the British people, but after learning English, and you learn the polite ways of communication and expressions, and how kind its speakers are – then you change your attitude towards the British. It is also worth noting here that “awareness” plays a key role in the willingness of the individual to change his/her outlook on things after the acquisition of the English language.

IQ11: How would you attribute the changes to the English language?

ACD1/11: Many of the changes are due to the English.

IQ12: Do you think the Emirati students may change some of his habits (his way of dress or food) after learning English?

ACD1/12: This depends on the degree of awareness and his/her ability to distinguish between “language”, “culture” and “intellect” and their role in identity formation: if the level of awareness is weak, then it is expected he/she would change after learning English, and vice versa.

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Appendix 3

Interviews Transcripts

Interview with Senior Arabic Curriculum Designer (#2)

22 November 2011

ACD 2 = Arabic Curriculum Designer

ACD2, Answer 1 = ACD1/1

IQ1 = Interviewer question 1

IQ: As an Arabic curriculum designer how do you see the Emirati ESL student views the English language?

ACD2/1: He sees it as a “necessary evil” and a mystery solved by chance in exams or solved by those who place the exams by putting questions that carry the answers than being a question.

IQ2: Do you see there is a relationship between language and identity?

ACD2/2: Yes. Language is a basic element of identity.

IQ3: How do you see the effect of the English language on the Emirati identity?

ACD2/3: Extremely dangerous although others may have other long term views.

IQ4: Is learning English a necessity for the Emirati student?

ACD2/4: More than necessary but on condition not on the expense of the Arabic language.

IQ5: How do you view the challenges faced by Emirati students when learning English?

ACD2/5: The environment that he lives in forms these challenges.

IQ6: Do you think the Emirati student Arabic language is affected after learning English?

ACD2/6: No unless he learned the second language on account of the first.

IQ7: Do you believe English has become a universal language?

ACD2/7: Yes

IQ8: Where do you think the Arabic language now stands in the UAE?

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ACD2/8: The status of the Arabic language is now like a very sick person pitied by his family. As if his family is silently whispering he is not well and alive nor is he dead and we got rid of him.

IQ9: What is your view about learning and teaching English in the UAE ten years from now?

ACD2/9: Controlled education and widespread of learning

IQ10: Do you believe that learning English changes the Emirati student?

ACD2/10: Definitely because we think through language.

IQ11: Does that change his view of things or people or life's events in general?

ACD2/11: The Emirati student will look at things and people and events in the English way

IQ12: Do you believe the Emirati student will change some of his habits (example clothes, food, etc) after learning English?

ACD2/12: When a language is rooted in society, then definitely it is reflected in both behaviour and habits.

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Appendix 4 Language Domains

Do you use Arabic (A) or English (E) with the following people?

Code Sheet

Ptp1 = Participant 1 - LD1 = Language Domain Answer 1

Participant 1(group 1)

Language Choice A/E	Language Targets	What is the main reason you think is behind your language choice
Mix	Nuclear family	1. With my nieces and nephews we talk Arabic and English. We do not really think about it. We use whatever gets the message across
A	Extended family	2. Out of respect for family members who do not speak English
Mix	Work colleagues	3. It depends on the colleague I am conversing with. With Westerners I do not think I have a choice but to speak English. With my Arab colleagues I tend to mix Arabic with English. I do not really plan which language I am going to use. The main reason for language choice is expression. Whatever helps me to elaborate and express my opinion better I use
Mix	Friends	4. Written English if chatting. Spoken Arabic most of the time. Again it depends on the friend I am talking to and their English ability
A	Neighbours	5. Arabic out of respect
A	Religious leaders	6. Arabic out of respect. I understand my religion much better in Arabic. Plus I am more expressive in Arabic when it comes to my religion. I believe because the Koran came down in Arabic, I grew up learning about it in Arabic
Mix	Teachers	7. It depends on the teacher and their language of preference
A	Local Community	8. Arabic out of respect

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Participant 2 (group 1)

Language Choice A/E	Language Targets	What is the main reason you think is behind your language choice
A	Nuclear family	1. Because we are Arabs and I have to use Arabic language with them. It is our mother tongue
A	Extended family	2. Because we are Arabs and I have to use Arabic language with them
A and E	Work colleagues	3. It depends because I'm dealing with Arabs and English speaking work colleagues
A	Friends	4. My friends are Arabs so I have to talk with them with our mother tongue which is Arabic Language.
A	Neighbours	5. Because they are Arabs
A	Religious leaders	6. Because we are speaking Arabic and our religion is Arabic
A & E	Teachers	7. Because I dealt with Arabs and English speaking teachers so I'm using both languages
A & E	Local Community	8. Because our mother tongue mother language is Arabic and we are dealing a lot of English speakers so I'm using both of A/E languages

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Participant 3 (group 1)

Language Choice A/E	Language Contexts	What is the main reason you think is behind your language choice
A	Nuclear family	1. To improve our Arabic language and we feel pride to speak in Arabic +respect culture at home, but sometime we speak English. It is our first language because we are Arabs
A/E	Extended family	2. I'm Emirati,
A/E	Work colleagues	3. We have different nationalities + English is the main language at work,
E	Friends	4. Easy to express our daily life and feelings in English,
A/E	Neighbors	5. Depends on their nationality,
A	Religious leaders	6. Arabic is the Quran Language / sign of respect,
A/E	Teachers	7. Mostly English but sometimes Arabic,
A/E	Local Community	8. Depends on the discussion/ place/ subject,

Participant 4 (group 2)

Language Choice A/E	Language Contexts	What is the main reason you think is behind your language choice
E	Shopping	1. Because most of the sellers are English speakers so most of my time I'm using English language while shopping.
E	Visual & Auditory media (TV, Radio, CD, DVD, etc.)	2. I like to watch English movies and listen to English news
A	Printed Media (newspapers, books, etc.)	3. I mainly read Arab newspapers to find out the local news and I like to read Arabic novels and Arabic social stories
E	Cinema, Theatre, Concerts	4. I like to watch English movies to enhance my English language auditory and verbally.
A & E	Work	5. Because we are dealing with English native speakers and Arabs
A	Correspondence, Telephone, official communication	6. I like to text and talk using the telephone in Arabic language because I can express more with this language and all my friends are Arabic speakers.
A	Religious meetings	7. Because our first language is Arabic and our religion is in Arabic
A & E	Leisure & Hobbies	8. I read Arabic and English books, I visited many countries and I had to deal with them in English, I watched Arabic and English movies
E	Information & Communication Technology (computers, phones, etc.)	9. Because I'm using English version window and I'm sending and receiving English emails and browsing the internet.

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Participant 5 (group 2)

Language Choice A/E	Language Contexts	What is the main reason you think is behind your language choice
E	Shopping	1. They do not speak Arabic
Mix	Visual & Auditory media (TV, Radio, CD, DVD, etc.)	2. No reason. Whatever I like.
Mix	Printed Media (newspapers, books, etc.)	3. I read and listen in both languages.
Mix	Cinema, Theatre, Concerts	4. No reason. Whatever I like.
Mix	Work	5. It depends on the context.
Mix	Correspondence , Telephone, official communication	6. It depends on the context.
NA	Religious meetings	7. I don't attend any.
NA	Leisure & Hobbies	8. I don't usually use any language
Mix	Information & Communication Technology (computers, phones, etc.)	9. It depends on the context.

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APPENDIX 5a

Interview Code Sheet

Participant No.	Participant pseudo Name	Details
1	Fawas	28 minute interview held in the Sorbonne University on 12 October 2011
2	Lessa	40 minute interview held at the Dom Café on 18 October 2011
3	Kales	30 minute interview held in the Sorbonne University on 3 November 2011
4	Yadeen	20 minute interview held in the Sorbonne University on 2 December 2011
5	Oumrain	27 minute interview held in the Sorbonne University on 22 March 2012
6	Bashayes	35 minute interview held at the Dom café on 7 May 2012
7	Salma	37 minute interview held at El Wahda mall on 9 May 2012
8	Manthas	25 minute interview held at Abu Dhabi mall on 13 May 2012

Interviewer	Int.
Interviewer Question 1	Int.1
Participant 1	Ptp1
Participant 1, Answer to question 1	Ptp1/1

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Participant One

Interview Transcripts

Ptp1: holding the Request for Volunteer notice and reading out loud the title

“How do Emirati students deal with the English language and the western culture”

Int: Yes, Yes, what do you think of the title, Big? I would like to ask you, and the first question I always like to start with, if I say you are an Emirati. What does that word mean to you. What does it mean “I am Emirati”, what do you feel, who comes to mind

Ptp1/1: of course to identify Emirati, or to identify the word Saudi or Omani or ...etc

Int: Yes

Ptp/2: the first thing to identify it means one belongs to a certain country

Int: Yes I agree with you here

Ptp/3: When we say you are an Emirati, it means I belong to a country called the Emirates, this Emirates has specific characteristics, it is an Arab country, thus I am at the same time an Arab

Int: Exactly

Ptp/4: at the same time it is an Islamic country, thus I am a Muslim at the same time

Int: Exactly

Ptp/5: So being Emirati means I am an Arab Muslim and at the same time as an Emirati I have certain habits and traditions

Int: Great

Ptp/6: So to identify an Emirati, as I said it means I am An Arab Muslim and of course I am proud of this country and to belong to it

Int: correct

Ptp/7: As Arabs we have common specific characteristics that identifies us as Arabs, no matter how cultures differ, we still have many commonalities between us and other Arab countries. However, there are certain habits, traditions and norms of thinking that characterizes each country from another.

Int: correct, correct

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Ptp/8: In general, this is what I understand from saying I am Emirati. And of course from another aspect, thank GOD, being an Emirati I belong to one of the Civilized (said in English) countries.

Int: Thank GOD

Ptp/9: Thank GOD, we live in abundance, it is a developed country not only from with its developed buildings but we also see development in its thinking strategies, development in behavior, development in its laws and flexible procedures and development in the daily life in general.

Int: correct. Now I want to ask you when you started learning English. At which age?

Ptp/10: Starting Kindergarten

Int: You where in school as of Kindergarten

Ptp/11: yes, I was in a private school

Int: yes

Ptp/12: I stayed in a private school from kindergarten until grade 12

Int: God Wishes

Ptp/13: I stayed until I finished high school then entered the American University of Sharjah where I received my Bachelor and now I am continuing my Masters at the French Surbonne University

Int: This means that English accompanied you from kindergarten until now

Ptp/14: exactly

Int: Now if I ask you whether you knew anything about the western culture, and then after learning English, did this knowledge change, or not. What I want you to tell me if you saw any connection between culture and language? When you learned English did your attitude towards the western culture change or not? Tell me about that, about your understanding of culture and language?

Ptp/15: First I want to identify what culture is

Int: I hope so

Ptp/16: How do you identify culture? What is culture in your mind so that my answer is specific?

Int: No. I want you to identify it for me. How do you understand culture? Because culture is a big word and does not have one meaning to all. Each one of us gives it a different meaning. I want to know how Fawaz understands it. So when I say Western culture what does that mean? When I say Emirati culture what does that mean? What is your understanding of it?

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Ptp/17: Ok, well there was a time in my life when I went to the United Kingdom

Int: Good

Ptp/18: I lived with a family, as they call it a 'live-in summer school' program

Int: you lived with a British family?

Ptp/19: Yes I lived with a British family. I stayed with them for a month and a half. I lived in their home, in their home, and from this, I learned their language

Int: Good

Ptp/20: But I did not know the habits and traditions of these people, how they think or how they look at life.

Int: Yes

Ptp/21: Good, from this point I, I was 16 years old then, I understand and realize what is happening around me but I lacked the experience or the experience (repeated in both English and Arabic) that would enable me to see how people live or what are the people's attitudes towards life, irrespective of the environment I come from

Int: Good Good

Ptp/22: I started sensing many differences even let us say in the 'home habits'

Int: How? What? Tell me?

Ptp/23: home habits and traditions are not like us. We have in our culture when the elderly speak the youngsters do not talk and listen

Int: How? Tell me more about that

Ptp/24: This is the Emirati culture, no matter what. Take me for example, when my father speaks or my mother speaks or someone like my grandfather speaks, I must listen. But there, it is not the same. Every day between the family there was a problem. The son used to fight with his mother and grandmother, he did not care that she was his mother and the grandmother in the family. This was extremely surprising for me. How can a boy of 14 years old talk in that manner with his elderly?

Int: Who was being offensive to whom?

Ptp/25: The boy with the mother and grandmother. He screamed in their faces and talked with arrogance.

Int: So how did you feel then?

Ptp/26: first I was surprised

Int: Surprised?

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Ptp/27: Big surprise, I mean extreme surprise because I thought how can this person talk to his grandmother in this way

Int: Yes, surprise

Ptp/28: Huge surprise, this was one of the cultures they had, the second thing was that they lacked family bonding

Int: Family bonding

Ptp/29: family bonding does NOT exist (with emphasis on not)

Int: what does that mean? Talk to me about it? What does family bonding mean to yhou?

Ptp/30: family bonding means if dinner time comes, nobody starts eating until we are all gathered together to eat

Int: Yes

Ptp/31: this is one

Int: right

Ptp/32: We as a family, we must meet daily, whether I am busy or not, but there, whoever is there is there, whoever eats, eats, whoever goes goes and whoever comes comes. I am talking about my personal experience in living in their house.

Int: yes, this is what I want to know, your personal experience

Ptp/33: My personal experience that I lived in this house, I do not say that all westerners live this way, and not all Emiratis are like me, but this is the personal experience that I gained

Int: yes

Ptp/34: this is what I saw

Int: yes. So when you witnessed this, what was your feeling? What did you tell yourself then?

Ptp/35: first thing, again Surprised, surprised from this thing, second I was raised up on certain principles and specific environment.

Int: sure

Ptp/36: I was brought up on certain things, this is wrong and this is right. So when I used to see these situations in front of me, I used to get sad to see these things happen in front of me, because I was raised in a home on certain principles or on specific sequences. Even not looking on what I was brought up on, I mean some people would say they are against me because life has changed. But I do not want to change my

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principles that I was raised with. So I do not want to witness anything that went against my principles

Int: You used to feel bad when you saw this?

Ptp/37: yes yes definitely and I was amazed

Int: Amazed

Ptp/38: Strange amazement

Int: yes. OK so was learning the English language useful to you? How? In what way?

Ptp/39: Yes it was very useful, and unfortunately, although we are in Emirate

Int: yes

Ptp/40: If you do not know English, we in Emirates, in an Arab country, you cannot do any of your daily chores. If you go to an Exchange Bureau, an exchange bureau, even an exchange bureau

Int: yes

Ptp/41: an exchange bureau all the workers speak English

Int: right

Ptp/42: English has helped me deal with people, irrespective whether I am in my own country or outside. This is one way

Int: yes

Ptp/43: the second thing, of course, making use of a second language, I learned a second language, it is useful for me personally, it is of benefit to me because I gain knowledge, and at the same time I hear the 'other' party and definitely in work related matters, and many other aspects

Int: sure, right, so tell me do you see there is a connection between a language and a culture?

Ptp/44: language and culture

Int: Think. When you learned English and saw the western culture, was there a connection between them? Or can I teach you English without the western culture?

Ptp/45: I see, I am now thinking... I can learn English without knowing anything about the western culture. Because when you learn a language, like for instance, the English language, you learn it, irrespective what is happening in the west. What is happening in a foreign country or in English speaking countries. I can learn it and take from it whatever I want, no more no less, so I do not feel there is a connection, there is no connection that I personally see

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Int: OK

Ptp/46: maybe there is a connection, but this is my personal opinion

Int: Your personal opinion, fine, that is what I want to hear. So if we come to the Arabic language, How, as an Emirati, living in the United Arab Emirates, do you see Arabic? Do you see it in a good status? Do you feel comfortable towards the Arabic language? Are you satisfied? Talk to me a bit about your feelings and attitudes towards Arabic as an Emirati national

Ptp/47: I do not see it existing. The language is not in its deserved place. It is not appreciated enough for many reasons

Int: Ok so what are the reasons, So you are not satisfied with the present status of the Arabic Language?

Ptp/48: NO (with emphasis)

Int: Not satisfied

Ptp/49: NO

Int: Why?

Ptp/50: Let me give you some examples

Int: please do

Ptp/51: what does it mean, for example when I am sitting with some Arab friends and they talk to you in English and none of us bearing an English nationality?

Int: You are all Emiratis

Ptp/52: Emiratis or Arabs

Int: Arabs

Ptp/53: Or they speak a sentence made up of 3 Arabic words and 3 English words

Int: Ok tell me what do you feel then? What is your attitude?

Ptp/54: I feel that the Arabic language is starting to disappear

Int: Disappear Disappear that is a big word

Ptp/55: Disappear in the sense that at home I have maid who is bringing up my children – by the way I am not married yet – but I am talking of the Emirati society

Int: I see

Ptp/56: I have a maid – this maid is speaking English to my children, the mother is speaking English to the children. The children go to a school and the parents say they

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will get the best education – some schools teach Arabic only twice a week or once a week. There is no focus – at this least this is how it was when I was in school may be the system (word said in English) is changed now.

Int: I see

Ptp/57: so what do I mean starting to disappear, I also mean we only use it in specific circumstances and even the language I am talking with you now is not the real Arabic, it is called the colloquial Arabic.

Int: Yes

Ptp/58: I am not using the real Arabic words, filled with everyday common words or popular words and if an Arab person seats with me now, maybe he cannot understand me – it is not the classical Arabic that all Arabs understand. I am talking Emirati Arabic that only Emiratis understand or the people from the Gulf States in general

Int: Yes. Ok, I wanted to know when your Emirati friend talks with you – like you said – a sentence with 3 words in Arabic and 3 or 4 words in English how does that make you feel

Ptp/59: I ask myself the same question – what is the reason behind this

Int: Yes

Ptp/60: why do we speak English that way

Int: and this is something that is annoying you or making you happy

Ptp/61: Definitely making me annoyed

Int: annoying

Ptp/62: Why, we do admit English is a universal language

Int: Yes

Ptp/63: we do admit this, we say this language [English] if you go to any country in the world, if you do not speak their language, then you speak English. That is ok, no problem. But as long as I am living in my country, we us Arabs, why should we resort to English, what is the reason, so that makes one annoyed from this and sad

Int: Sad?

Ptp/64: Definitely

Int: Ok, so what do you think you can do as a person or may be as a society or on a wider scale as a country, so that the status of the Arabic language is in the status you would be satisfied with because you just said that you are not happy about the current status of the Arabic language. What can you do?

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Ptp/65: I swear God, if I am talking on the personal level I can say if someone talks to me in English I answer in Arabic

Int: ok, I want to see if you and I go 'fly' ten years from now or 15 years, where do you see the Arabic language?

Ptp/66: if we are talking 10 or 15 years from now of course the English language is in the increase and the Arabic is only used in its colloquial way – between you and me – the person who is of the same nationality like me or between me and an Arab – we go back to the idea of one sentence made of 3 English words and 3 Arabic words

Int: correct

Ptp/67: of course the English language will be more widespread while the Arabic language – I want say totally disappears – but will keep in the decrease and decrease in its usage

Int: ok in your point of view – when you learned English and as an Emirati and your have the Emirati culture – do you think your identity – you identity changed in any way after learning English. Did you think in a different manner, what happened to your identity and again identity is a big word and nobody has one identity or an identity that does not change. What is your feeling or attitude towards this? Tell me about that

Ptp/68: Regarding the way I think, definitely I changed

Int: How?

Ptp/69: because the day I learned English it opened up many doors for me, I can read on the Internet more, I can read books, I can deal and sit with foreigners

Int: good

Ptp/70: now these foreigners, or books or magazines on the internet – I can take what is of benefit to me and leave the rest – the rest which is against what I see is beneficial to me – the day I take, I take what is not available in Arabic books but not necessarily I take and insert what are in the books or characteristics of people – I take and put in my life – but in general it does affect my personal life and the road (word said in English) I take in my personal life.

Int: correct correct

Ptp/71: The language has helped me but we cannot say it widened the scope of my path in life

Int: do you think your identity remained the same, I mean if we look at an Emirati national who did not learn English or was not exposed to the western culture, do you think his identity would be the same as you are now?

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Ptp/72: as I told you before, the word identity is a big word, we say personal identity which means belonging, and it means habits and traditions, there is a possibility that it might change

Int: there is a possibility?

Ptp/73: yes there is a possibility that the thinking might change

Int: and so you see if this thinking is changed, is this to the better or to the worse

Ptp/74: it depends on the person; I mean there are people who learned English and became worse

Int: worse from what angle?

Ptp/75: I mean they took the worse from it

Int: like what?

Ptp/76: I mean when I travel abroad, I speak English, some people would tell you when I went to this country or that, I do things which I cannot do in my own country or they learn negative things not in our country or suitable to our life or our traditions. At the same time, I can still travel and learn, learn their system of business (word said in English), because they have a good commerce system, they have shops I can make good deals I can learn from them I can learn from them allot – everyone according to his own character – how he chooses, chooses the path he wants or the idea and thoughts he needs in his life

Int: correct, or ok if I ask you if you remember in the year 2008, the president announced and made a campaign and launches the year of the Arabic language, why do you think he did this initiative? Was there a need for it? And how do you feel and what is your attitude towards such a campaign? That in UAE we have a year of the Arabic language?

Ptp/77: yes, of course this only indicates how much we appreciate and need to protect our Arabic language

Int: do you see it need protection?

Ptp/78: yes

Int: from what?

Ptp/79: same as we said before, the government correspondences of doing business in government or wherever you go in a shop of anywhere you are forced to write in English or are obliged to speak English

Int: and you do not like this

Ptp/80: NO [with emphasis]

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Int: it is bothering you? Do you want to change it?

Ptp/81: yes. If I am in an Arab country why don't I make all my correspondences and communication in Arabic. But when I enter a shop I find them all from different nationalities speaking English. So if an Arab enters the shop they cannot communicate with him

Int: tell me how you feel when you are in your own country and have to speak English?

Ptp/82: Definitely I am unhappy

Int: Unhappy, does this mean you want things to change?

Ptp/83: Definitely. Definitely

Int: ok so you said the Arabic language needs protection you want to protect the Arabic language from what?

Ptp/84: from the lack of its use and from the lack of its benefit. I mean I do not have to use it now. I do not have of use the Arabic language – when I go places the Arabic language is cancelled, it is not important. But I want it to be important, and that I would need to use it everywhere. The day I go places or to a government authority I want to find the Arabic language and the English language but now when you go to a private company, the form (word said in English) is in English or if you go anywhere the form is in English

Int: ok if we say what you would like to see, let dream for a minute together, what regarding the Arabic language would like to see different or the Emirati identity or the Emirati culture, what would you hope for in the future?

Ptp/85: as for the Arabic language I hope to see everything written in Arabic

Int: you mean in this country

Ptp/86: in this country everything is translated in English, that is no problem, but when we find things written only in English, like the menus (word said in English) in restaurants are only found in English

Int: What does that make you feel Fawaz?

Ptp/87: One gets very upset

Int: Upset

Ptp/88: I am not saying take off the English – keep it but also put the Arabic

Int: but there are some government offices that write in both languages

Ptp/89: yes but if we receive English correspondences we only answer them back in English

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Int: tell me do you see that in order to maintain the Arabic language has any connection with maintaining the Emirati culture or the Emirati identity. Do you see any link between them?

Ptp/90: Definitely

Int: How do you see this link or this connection?

Ptp/91: If I totally change my life into the English language it opens doors for me these doors bring ideas from the outside because I am used to the English language, the English language opens doors. From these doors I bring things into my country and so I am scared that the Arab identity or the Emirati identity starts gradually to decrease, decrease more than its current level

Int: do you mean the Emirati identity decreases when the English increases

Ptp/92: I mean now look the official language of the country is Arabic but the day I do not know English the English language how can I then bring English ideas or English equipment and when I do bring them in, these things will lighten or decreases the existence of our traditional identity it will decrease from it being available in the country

Int: correct and this is bothering you?

Ptp/93: yes definitely

Int: would you like to change it?

Ptp/94: YES

Int: how? How would you change it? As an Emirati, as a son of this nation, what would you do Fawaz?

Ptp/95: The Arabic language should, must be given in our schools

Int: ok

Ptp/96: when I teach you Arabic but people look at it from a different way, I am an Arab why should I learn Arabic. In schools we learn for 12 years and we are taught Arabic but we must teach people why we are teaching them the Arabic language whey Arabic grammar is very important it is not important to go deep into the language but you must not the worth and importance of the Arabic language because it is the language that represents your identity, you as an individual, it is the language of your country, and you must know it and know what it is worth, and how much that by only changing one diacritic mark the entire meaning of the word changes

Int: exactly

Ptp/97: first we must make people understand that the day they study English, their ideas and thoughts may change. The day I go to places I must learn English to I can get

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around doing my daily chores. But when I am talking Arabic I am saying I am an Arab so we must teach people the importance of the Arabic language the language before we teach it to them

Int: the importance of the language, because in your point of view language is connected to what?

Ptp/98: language is directly connected to identity

Int: so when we teach them the language we are enforcing the Emirati identity

Ptp/99: exactly

Int: who do you think is responsible for all this? This is all very good, who do you think is responsible for the status of the Arabic language or the status of the English language, or who is responsible?

Ptp/100: responsible from what side exactly?

Int: because you said I want to change the status of the Arabic language, you said you are not satisfied with where it is now. You said, and I am repeating your words, we want to regain the importance of the Arabic language, and show people why we teach it in schools. So who will change this current picture, the picture which you said you are unhappy with

Ptp/101: the schools

Int: the schools ok how about the home

Ptp/102: definitely the home with the school

Int: well how about decision-makers?

Ptp/103: yes decision-makers but as a layman you do not know why things are as they are but me as a person I should know why I am being taught Arabic in schools as a person I should know why we say for example this is an international university and why we put in it English but why not also put Arabic as a sign of respect to the people of the country as a sign of respect to the people in this country and by not doing so I am looking down at your own language [Arabic]

Int: correct correct

Ptp/104: the homes and the schools and the decision-makers all are responsible

Int: what do you personally see what is your point of view

Ptp/105: I personally think most important comes the home first then the school

Int: ok

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Ptp/106: these are the main factors but if we start looking in the laws, or amending them this goes back to the decision-maker himself, but it is the school that puts ideas and thoughts in the students' minds

Int: correct

Ptp/107: and in the home, it is the place where the principles are planted, if the person is convinced with the importance of his own language, disregarding what is available in the world or what is available or amended regarding laws, I am not convinced in using the English language, it is a matter that goes back to the home and the school I feel these are the pillars of this issue and that they [home and school] should emphasize the importance of using the Arabic language in our everyday dealings in everything

Int: thank you for your time

Ptp/108: Your most welcome

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Participant two

Interview Transcripts

Int: Thank you for meeting me after a long day of work and study

Ptp/1: God is with us all

Int: If God is willing, let's start having a chat together and the first question I like to start with is the word Emirati means what to you? When you say I am Emirati, the word I am Emirati means what? Indicates what? What do you feel when you say I am an Emirati? Like if I would say I am an Egyptian, definitely this word means many things for me

Ptp/2: of course

Int: right ok so for you when you say I am Emirati what does this word mean to you. What do you feel and think

Ptp/3: wow this is not easy, by the way this question looks easy but it is not at all

Int: I agree, think about it for a while

Ptp/4: true a person can give it a lot of thought

Int: take your time

Ptp/5: is the recorder going on OK

Int: let us see, yes it is fine

Ptp/6: ok let us see, I will talk to you about what is going on in my mind, maybe I am not very organized, so please excuse me, because my Arabic language is sometimes too colloquial so please forgive me

Int: no problem, speak the way you feel comfortable

Ptp/7: you see I am talking Emirati Arabic now

Int: I know, I have no problem I understand you very well

Ptp/8: Thank God I will give you now all the thoughts that come to mind and I will not hide any thought and I will expose the thoughts in my heart

Int: correct that is exactly what I am looking for

Ptp/9: but when you ask me what it means to be an Emirati, I would say when I say I am Emirati I am saying Emirati and I am proud to be so, the first feeling I get is that I am proud to be an Emirati because Emirates is an Islamic country I feel I am Muslim not only an Emirati, I am proud because I am also a Muslim

Int: Thank God

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Ptp/10: I am proud to be part of the nation this Emirati nation and it means to me that I belong to Sheikh Zayed may God rest his soul in heaven

Int: Amen

Ptp/11: this word means to me I apologize because of the thoughts come out a bit mingled

Int: no no say whatever comes to mind

Ptp/12: this word means that I have an ancient history and that I belong to it, it is the place of my grandparents I feel everything I feel anywhere I go or any word I say did not come easy it came after long effort of people whether they are my family and all Emiratis are my family at the end

Int: of course

Ptp/13: and until now we say Sheikh Zayed, we say father Zayed because he is the father of all Emiratis God rest his soul in heaven

Int: Amen

Ptp/14: and of course he was a blessing and now in his son Sheikh Khalifa I do not know what to tell you believe me no matter what I say I can never do justice to the word and what it means to me to say I am Emirati

Int: I do understand you I do. ok now let me take you back a while, when you learned English, tell me about your experience, how did you take it? When did you learn English? What did you feel when you learning another language besides your own? I remember when we first spoke you said being Emirati means I live in an Islamic country, which means you connected your identity with religion. Did I understand correctly?

Ptp/15: yes yes you did

Int: ok so when you came to learn English, when did you learn it? What was your experience; tell me a bit about that. What were your feelings, your thoughts and ideas as you entered this experience

Ptp/16: what is my experience while learning a second language English

Int: yes I mean when you entered a new language which is not the language of your own country

Ptp/17: look maybe I belong to the generation that did not learn English at home and I have many friends who learned English at home a generation who even never went to school

Int: I see

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Ptp/18: but I learned it in school because my family where very much holding unto the Arabic language at home may be because my father and mother never knew English I mean they were not university graduates

Int: I see

Ptp/19: so we did not have any connection with servants from other countries I mean those who spoke English I can tell you that I started learning English in school to tell you the truth English for me was a very difficult language difficult to learn I used to face many difficulties how to learn this language how to learn it from many aspects its grammar its rules from many aspects it was very difficult

Int: how old where you when you started learning English

Ptp/20: you mean when I learned it

Int: yes

Ptp/21: I was in grade one (words said in English). Around six or seven years then?

Int: yes

Ptp/22: this was my start with the English language then I started noticing everything around me is written in English books written in English even for children even in cartoons what we used to see on television was in English even sometimes the sweets and candies we buy from the shop is written on it in English so with practice and my observations around me, English became in our lives everywhere so finish we became so accustomed to it my generation is so connected to it we got so close to the English language and even got worse when we entered university

Int: I see

Ptp/23: It is true that I graduated from Zayed university which is in Abu Dhabi but because the basic language in the university was English, it was also used as a language of communication I mean wherever you went you must speak English. So I blame the university for making us forget our Arabic language. This was the first step for me that I must learn English well I mean my language skills got much stronger because in the university my professors where British Americans Israelis and there was no other way in communicating with them except in English. And in schools, as you know, from grade one to the final high school year our teacher was from Egypt or Jordan or Syria or Sudan what I mean is that she used to talk to us in English and we answered back in Arabic

Int: I understand

Ptp/24: what I mean we did not learn much in school but we became very good once we entered university

Int: I see

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Ptp/25: I can honestly tell you that the university I owe it to the university that I can say that I know this language [English] and I consider myself I master it well all because of the university

Int: I see. Ok let me ask you this tell me when you learned English did to you take or get to know anything about the western culture or is language something and culture is something else. Think. When you where learning and speaking to your professors and or the books did you every see a link between the two or do you think this is something and this is something totally different between learning English and the western culture

Ptp/26: no I see them separately I mean I could say we connect to English as a language that we must learn because at the end of the year there is an exam or a project (word said in English) that we must do in English as for the western culture it is around us everywhere there is no escape even our clothes is like the westerners all our shops here write in English not in Arabic I can say that the western culture is much more in our daily lives it surrounds us everywhere and that is not because I learned English

Int: ok now as you said the western culture is everywhere around you, is that something good or bad? In your personal opinion is this nice that has its benefits or something not nice that has its negatives? What do you think?

Ptp/27: I will be honest

Int: yes please

Ptp/28: I honestly think that anything too much will turn to its opposite may in some stages of my life I felt that the western culture or the English language has overshadowed on us too much I mean to an extent that I am deeply regrettable. I may be one of the people that whenever there is a lecture on cultures or exchange of cultures, whenever there are these discussions or anything that is concerned with cultures I would be the first to go and I like to participate and give my opinion. Because, unfortunately, whether I am who I am or even people around me I am sorry to say that the Emirati people and I do not generalize here but the majority of them are proud that they know the English language proud of it proud that their children speak English and is a living truth we witness every day in our lives. I swear God I do not know how we say we want our children to learn Arabic and hold onto their Islamic religion and you people are proud I mean at home according to my personal experience my sister has a son instead of telling him come we will eat she says come we will eat (words said in English) WHY? We are all Arabs she should talk to him in Arabic. See what I mean

Int: Tell me what do you feel what are your thoughts? When your own sister who is living with you who is an Emirati Muslim says come instead of come (English)

Ptp/29: I feel angry angry but some people as they say do you know the term (word said in English) 'snobbish' it means she is proud to speak English but no no this is not a sign of development on the contrary the West should learn Arabic but the Arabic language is too hard for them but here even those who do not speak well English at least try by saying water come eat go (4 words said in English) they try it is important for such

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people that they show to others they are civilized ... I speak English even with my young child who did not even start KG I talk English

Int: why do you think or feel that people do such things to indicate they are civilized why why do you feel that

Ptp/30: because see all around you everything has turned into English what shall I say everywhere you go if you do not speak English it means you are backward

Int: backward is a strong word

Ptp/31: very backward and I confirm it I do not just say it lightly or forget it I honestly mean it backward

Int: and you totally understand its meaning?

Ptp/32: yes I understand its meaning because I am living it living it

Int: How?

Ptp/33: Now I mean now why I will give you an example for instance when my sister and I go to a shop, my sister could not communicate with the Pilipino girl who is selling in the shop, why because the girl is speaking English only, my sister would say do you have such and such a size (word said in English) and the sales girl looks down at her the look just saying you do not speak English I do not understand you. Even if an Emirati man or an Emirati woman saw my sister in the situation they would say what is this backward she is so much behind, we have reached this era and she does not speak English. This is reality and I see it and face it all around me in everyday situations because I have sisters who are much older than me and they have started learning English very late in their lives may be in grades four or six primary even I have some of the them started learning English in preparatory school. I mean very late in their lives. And I have some sisters who never entered university and so their English level is very basic which means very simple so the day we go out they do not speak English. Even all the people around us, whether they are Arabs or even foreigners they are astonished why doesn't she speak English. This means that that my sister's situation is a sign of her being backward although I find it the contrary and find this that she is holding on to her Arabic language. I see as they force us to speak their English language why don't we force them to learn our Arabic language. I mean I am very strong about this issue I am very angry about this issue

Int: OK so you are angry so you I mean I want to know what is your feeling when you say the Arabic language and the English language are you satisfied with the status of the Arabic language or the status of the English language in Emirates, I mean being an Emirati and all

Ptp/34: No No unfortunately, the Arabic language is not given its rights

Int: who is not giving it its rights?

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Ptp/35: us

Int: who is us?

Ptp/36: people of this country, we as Emiratis do not give it its rights I get angry for example I am now in the maser program or not let us leave the master when I was still an undergraduate in the university when I talk with any Emirati girl in class, you can notice, you may have noticed, I became like them. This thing has dominated me. Three quarters of our talk is in English. Three quarters, even in the Arabic subjects in the university, we talk to our professors in English. He gets angry at us and says, girls your first language is Arabic why don't you speak Arabic and we answer back saying. We swear God Sir, English comes out easier. Even to the extent that sometimes people joke and say so English is dominating you to that extent? He says, Oh God, you are in your own country and you speak English! Look, how many years we have been studying English, but unfortunately, even I, I feel guilty towards this. Even when I, I mean, when I speak to my friends or my brothers and sisters, everything is in English smothered with four or five Arabic words.

Int: Fine, so you see some people saying that the English language has become a universal language, a universal language, who do you think about that. Tell me your personal opinion about it, that it has become a universal language.

Ptp/37: So what will happen if we do not know English? The simplest thing is that we cannot travel if one does not know English.

Int: That bring me to another point, why did you learn English? What were the reasons that made you learn English? And when do you speak English? When do you speak Arabic? What are the instances that make you speak either language?

Ptp/38: OK, one by one, your questions need thinking

Int: take your time, think, think we have the time if you are not too tired

Ptp/39: No I am not

Int: what makes you speak English? What made you learn English?

Ptp/40: This is a very good question. Very good to the extent that I want to ponder for a while about it

Int: contemplate about it. Ask yourself, why did I learn English? And what would have happened if I did not learn English?

Ptp/41: Ok, first, may be I learned it because it was obligatory, before I could understand, before I could plan for myself or ask what am I doing. I did not know that I had to learn English in order to communicate with people or that I had to learn English so I can get along with my daily chores in life. So the first thing that it was obligatory that I learn English, on the basis that the English language, we must learn

Int: Who made it obligatory for you?

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Ptp/42: as a curriculum, as a curriculum forced on us by the ministry and that we must learn English

Int: fine

Ptp/43: so if we ask who made it obligatory, our ministry made it obligatory

Int: good

Ptp/44: the same as the ministry made obligatory that we study Geography or the Arabic language or Religion. These are subjects we must learn. But later on in life, I 'absorbed' that for instance, I mean in the university I absorbed more and understood why we learn English, and more over, because of me

Int: yes

Ptp/45: I like very much to mingle with people from different nationalities. I mean I like very much to know other nationalities. Language was the only means for me to reach my target and to reach those people. Language makes it easier for me to get acquainted with them, the English language

Int: correct

Ptp/46: second may be because I am very socially active (last two words said in English) on the Internet and I have my own blogs and face book, the English language, to the extent that some sites after they transformed them into Arabic sites, they sometimes change some icons to Arabic and we got used to them in English, so we ask what does that mean

Int: I see

Ptp/47: so its finished. Even for us, the word or the feeling come out from us, I mean the feeling we sense became easier to be expressed in English. I do not know, even, I feel that the English word comes out of my mouth nice much more nice than it would be in Arabic. Because if we look at the Arabic words they are much harder than the English

Int: of course I understand

Ptp/48: that is it

Int: OK let turn to the Arabic language and its status. When do you talk Arabic? With whom? How do you feel when you talk Arabic?

Ptp/49: Please God forgive me regarding this thing. But I mean, God forgive me, frankly the only time that I speak Arabic, from beginning till end, is during praying. See only during praying. Even when I am at home, English must come in. It is impossible that a sentence is all in Arabic. See to what extent. God forgive me on this. This is something really very big. And it is something that makes me angry

Int: You asked, several times, that God forgives you. Do you feel guilty?

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Ptp/50: I do feel sinful

Int: sinful?

Ptp/51: yes, sinful

Int: because you said, more than once, Forgive me, one would ask for forgiveness from God when he does something wrong

Ptp/52: Yes, because this is wrong. When I say the Arabic language, I am talking of the Language of the holy Koran. I am saying, bit by bit, we are all abandoning the Arabic language. I tell you, I swear God that all our means of life indicates, I mean look at the western culture, Look at the people, they say it imposed itself on us. I say No, people allowed it to be imposed on them. Because the Arabic culture does exist, but you, you an individual who has brain what are your directions. Do you target the western culture or not. You can control yourself. I mean we went to it, intentionally, we allowed for the western culture to affect us

Int: to affect you, is this something that is bothering you?

Ptp/53: do you want the truth? No. because we all see the western culture as, I mean for me it means fashion, so when we speak even of outer appearance of the western culture, I mean the way they dress. I see it more practical or even the way they speak, cool (word said in English). Do you understand me? I mean for example when I wear my traditional Emirati costume then I go to class (word said in English) it is not practical, not like if I am wearing a T-shirt and jeans, see what I mean, I am just giving you an example of the outer appearance only

Int: OK, tell me did the western culture affect you? How?

Ptp/54: Yes it did affect me

Int: Positively or negatively?

Ptp/55: or how people see it affected me

Int: No no let us leave other people out of this, I want to know how it affected Hessa, how did the western culture affect the Emirati identity in you, if it did, how? This is what I want to know

Ptp/56: like what

Int: I want to know, for you personally, because I do not know. I am not Emirati. I want to know how it affected you as an Emirati, you learned the English language, and you said that the western culture is everywhere around you. How did it affect you? Think about it. Let us say if we take an Emirati girl who did not learn English at all or was not introduced to the western culture like you

Ptp/57: shall I tell you what we would call her

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Int: what

Ptp/58: Bedouin. I swear God

Int: guilty

Ptp/59: yes in the Emirati identity Right I am guilty I do not feel I gave it her rights and I feel that the coming new generation will have a very weak Emirati identity. I feel that the new generation will not know anything about the Emirati identity. In my opinion, this is very risky because the western identity is encroaching on us. I tell you for all the people, the western identity means development it means development

Int: does it mean development for the Emirati people or for you?

Ptp/60: for you especially, because I cannot talk on behalf of the Emirati people. But I can say for me and for my generation

Int: Yes I want to know what it means for you

Ptp/61: and I am talking about the people I know, my family, and my friends. Because we all share the same ideas, it is impossible that I live with people who have different ideas than me. We share the same living and that is why I am telling you this represents my thoughts and ideas and those around me.

Int: correct so what do you think the west has done to the Emirati identity?

Ptp/62: from what aspect exactly?

Int: I mean, you said encroaching, you used the word encroach

Ptp/63: yes encroaching and dominating too

Int: yes this is what I mean, you see that the western culture has encroached and dominated on the Emirati identity?

Ptp/64: look, I see the Emirati identity has many aspects I mean has different facets

Int: yes that is right correct

Ptp/65: I mean there is an Emirati identity regarding my clothes

Int: yes right right

Ptp/66: an Emirati identity regarding my language, the language that I am speaking now

Int: yes

Ptp/67: from the side of my religion there are many many sides

Int: definitely of course you are absolutely right, the word identity is very big and there is not one definition to it. I think it means so many different things, like food, drink, language, feelings, media, culture and so much more.

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Ptp/68: correct

Int: So I would like to know which side of all these or others, do you see or feel that the west or the western culture has changed you, either to the worse or better?

Ptp/69: I cannot specify which one, but look, as I said before the western identity has dominated us

Int: OK

Ptp/70: for instance, now we are in the mall, look around you, this is the environment that we are living and that has affected us. Look, look around you in the mall, look at the shops, do you find one shop that sells Emirati clothes? No. They are all selling imported clothes, all is western culture

Int: You are talking about clothes?

Ptp/71: yes the identity from the clothes side

Int: I see

Ptp/72:as regards food is concerned, look around you, we do not have one restaurant that serves Emirati food. Look how big this mall is, look its three or more floors, not one restaurant is selling Emirati food so now I only gave you two examples, clothes and food

Int: and is this something that is upsetting you?

Ptp/73: Yes or maybe no

Int: or it does not make a difference with you

Ptp/74: not that it does not make a difference with me, but I never sat and thought of it that way. I mean, you know when you are sleeping restfully, and the world take you, life takes you, because I go and come, I work and study, these basic elements, I forgot them, I mean I never thought about them, did not think about them before

Int: OK, now if you, would think after ten or 15 years from now, regarding the Arabic language and the English language and the Emirati culture and western culture. Where will each one be? Let us say your children's generation, based on what you see and feel now, where will they be?

Ptp/75: I feel, not my children but my grandchildren, God willing, I feel we will reach a stage where they will not know how to talk Arabic. No seriously, I mean it even with the presence of school. I know people who are school graduates, schools of the United Arab Emirates, who do not know how to talk Arabic, their Arabic language, or if they speak it, it is very wrong, even schools now are concentrating too much on the English language. I can tell you, I see this in my sister. My sister is younger than me, she is considering the coming generation. Her school report indicates that the marks in English

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are in the nineties and in the Arabic are in the sixties. I told her is our mother American or British?

Why? Why? What is happening? Masha Allah, now she is 14 years of age just imagine her children, which are the new generations and the next and the next. One feels that Arabic will be totally deleted from them. This is how I feel, even the religion is in a decline

Int: OK, do you have any wishes, wishes that might change this feeling you have. Let's hope, what would you hope or dream, what would you dream would happen in Emirates, how would you, or what would you like to change in your sister who is 14 years now? Because you said you are upset with the current picture. Right?

Ptp/76: yes, the Arabic language and religion, I mean, everything concerning this. I wish also to delete the idea that anyone who does not know English is backward or retarded. This is the idea that I, I mean must change must

Int: what would you do as an Emirati to change this idea, that those who do not know English are retarded or backward, who would do this change? What can be done to change this idea because you emphasized on it many times, that those who do not know English are backward and retarded. Who is responsible?

Ptp/77: I do not know

Int: You do not know

Ptp/78: I do not know

Int: the question is too difficult?

Ptp/79: very much, too difficult. Because wherever I go, the western culture, finish, it has dominated us, I honestly feel, that bit by bit, that the Emirati identity, I mean or the Emirati nature or characteristics around us, is vanishing. I would not be lying to you if I say, and I will not name which Emirate, but one day I was browsing the net and I saw some pictures and images, or regions and buildings

Int: inside Emirates

Ptp/80: yes pictures and photographs from inside the Emirates. I swear God I thought they were from New York

Int: Why

Ptp/81: to that extent, we even exchanged our buildings. I mean it looked exactly like New York but when I read the caption (word said in English), no I found it is an Emirate here. I said this is impossible, to this extent, I mean I cannot even distinguish my own country. I thought it was New York that was in the photographs from a very different culture. And it is so far away from us. Where are we? And where are they? They did not go and build houses from palm-tree branches. No, we went and imitated them. See what I mean. I am not against this thing, on the contrary but I am telling you

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this thing is making extremely puzzled. I cannot answer. Who is responsible? I do not know who is responsible. May be I can tell you I am responsible, may be you are responsible because you teach us English. May be this one or the other. Who can help us I do not know. I can only ask God to help us because I really do not know.

Int: OK do you remember in the year 2008, the United Arab Emirates President announced the year as the year of the Arabic language. Why do you think he did this initiative?

Ptp/82: I do not know about this. Honestly I do not know, but what I do know there was an initiative about the Arabic language, which was the initiative of Sheikh Mohamed Bin Rashed when he said all government must write all their correspondences in Arabic all in Arabic

Int: fine, so before the Sheikh Mohamed initiative, where the government correspondences, or any letter coming out from a government body, is written in both English and Arabic. Because if he did an initiative, it means he changed what was happening. Am I right in understanding that?

Ptp/83: Yes, correct,

Int: How do you see this initiative, how did he do it?

Ptp/84: Definitely he saw that people were moving away from the Arabic language and he wanted to draw them back to it

Int: Do the correspondences issued by a government authority was written in both English and Arabic, then the initiative said all official correspondences must be in Arabic only. So what do you think was his motive? Why did he do this?

Ptp/85: Definitely his motive motive

Int: what was his motive

Ptp/86: Look, I will tell you, Sheikh Mohamed Bin Rashed, God save him for us, always has a vision, a vision which is different from Sheikh Zayed, God rest his soul in heaven, I feel he has future vision, so he knows what will happen in the future, I am sure he felt, I mean one of his motives was surely that he saw people moving away from the Arabic language

Int: correct correct

Ptp/87: This is definite, definite. I am sure he came across many humiliating situations, I mean, he saw Muslim Emiratis who could not even write a letter in Arabic. I tell you something else, he had a vision. I tell you something Gihane, yesterday I received a message on my email in Arabic and I had to write just write in Arabic [Thank You for Your Email, we will reply to you soon] (this sentence was said in English), I swear I could not write it in Arabic, not with correct Arabic. I swear God I had to ask one of my colleagues, I said please come and help me, she came and said, What is wrong with you, I said I cannot write this sentence in Arabic, I received an Arabic email and have to

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answer back in Arabic and I cannot. She said fine I will help you. Then she looked at the one sentence and said, My God, this is the sentence you could not write in Arabic. I said I am truly sorry, but what was worse, is later then came by supervisor who gave me a text in English and said translate that into Arabic. This was the challenge of the day (sentence said in English). I mean, you left all the colleagues, and here you are, coming to Hessa to translate it for you, Hessa who could not write one sentence in Arabic now. But I took it as a challenge and Thank to God, I did do it.

Int: Thank God

Ptp/88: You see, I mean, inside me there is skills of the Arabic language, whatever happens, this is our language, I mean always, thank God, we read the Koran and we always pray and we always look and ponder in the holy book. I mean sometimes, something natural, the Arabic language springs from us. We do learn it in school, but as God wishes, it sometimes comes natural. But what happened in my office was an exam. I cannot blame the company I work for, but on such days, I say may God forgive them, they made us forget the Arabic, our company.

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Participant three

Interview Transcripts

Int: The first question I always like to start with is what does it mean to be an Emirati? For example I am Egyptian, so when I say I am Egyptian it means so much to me, it makes me feel many different things, now you are an Emirati, and so what does that mean to you?

Ptp/1: The first thing that comes to mind, when I say I am Emirati, is Belonging, I belong to the nation of Emirates. I belong to UAE, second Just as a culture (said in English) this is the first thing I feel, I am patriotic

Int: Yes

Ptp/2: The second thing is that I identify myself as an Emirati, I am an Emirati, and what does it mean to be an Emirati? Being an Emirati you must meet a certain standard, you must be positive, you have to be a generous person, to me must meet certain standards (said in English)

Int: Did you put these standards to yourself

Ptp/3 To be Emirati means I must be generous, I must return back what my country gave me, my country did allot for me, much good, then I must return to my country all the good it did for me. They paid so much for my education and my health and for everything. The third thing is that, we have a very big debt to UAE, and now it is our turn to pay back, this is what I feel, when I say I am Emirati (said in English). Even at work, when we say we are locals, or we are Emiratis, it weighs much, I feel being an Emirati is being one of a kind. You are a special person (said in English).

Int: What gives you this feeling?

Ptp/4: Not because I am who I am, but because I belong to a unique culture. Not because I am Khaled, because I belong to a unique culture, a unique country, a unique aspect a unique territory

Int: let us move to another point, When did you learn English

Ptp/5 Since primary schooling

Int: I want you to talk to me about your learning English experience and the Western culture. Do you see a link between them.

Ptp/6: Yes there is a very big relation between learning English and the Western culture. I will give you an example. I graduated from a Government school in Al Ain. That

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means we took very little English, everything was taught in Arabic and we took English only as a language which was not much. What made me like the English language was, when I was young I used to love watching TV. I saw series and funny shows in English. I used to see MBC and they used to show many funny sitcoms, they were 30 minutes, it was a foreign channel. This is part of my history, there was a series called the Fresh Principal, it was about an American teenager, he was trying to know his way, he was very cool, being brought up in his very uptight family. I liked the idea, he is cool, he speaks in a better accent that was in the nineties (said in English). This series affected me so much that I said I must continue my studies in America. I didn't even know where America was on the map, but I said I wanted to continue my studies in America (said in English). I liked their culture, I liked when they go to schools they have their locker rooms, we have. I was impressed by the way they teach in their schools, their dynamics, everything was so different. Everything was so different than our schools. In our schools, we have the morning lines, then go up to classes, lesson one, two, three, it was a very traditional way of teaching. Not original at all. For me it was the other way round, not that the language introduced me to their culture, but because of their culture I liked their language, so for me it was the opposite. Everyone asks me this question: Where did you study your English, how do you know so good this language, and I answer, frankly, it is from TV, from their culture. Not TV as a screen, but from their culture, I was introduced to another culture; I got to know that we do not have one culture, but several cultures, and because of that I liked English. But there is a very big fall or pitch here; some people for example will think for example X likes a culture, means he will be following that culture. That does not really happen.

May be because our culture is planted, very well planted in us, so no matter how we like a culture it cannot take our culture away. For example I can be wearing a T-shirt and a pair of jeans, it does not make me less Emirati, it does not make me less Emirati. Let's us say when I travel on a business trip and I am wearing a suit, maybe it is a very small idea, but sometimes we like to put a pin of the UAE flag. It is not an obligation; it is not stamped in our passport that we need to put a flag on our suit. But these little things really create this big culture. Think of it this way, what makes a big dessert, it is the small particles. And these small things make our culture. For example, now in our office when we have a celebration and we go and get Arabic coffee to everyone, even the way we pour it, not like everyone, it must be followed by the Emirati way, it is our tradition. I would love someone to ask me about this just to teach him about our culture. May be because when I was 4 or 5 years old, there was the hip hop music coming up, I would love for example to have a German lady listen to our Mohamed Abdo (a famous Emirati singer), or anything from our culture. Just to say we like our culture, we love our culture, but please, do consider other things. But we do have some common things. We may be thousands of miles away, but we do share a lot of things.

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Int: I see, I understand

Ptp/7: All this would not be taking place unless we knew the language. Once we can break the language barriers, this is how we can communicate.

Int: You have strongly linked language with culture, did I understand you correctly, you do see a strong link between culture and language, right?

Ptp/8: YES, definitely

Int: OK, let me now turn to the Arabic language. You as an Emirati where do you see the Arabic language going? Talk to me about the place of the Arabic language in UAE, and how do you see it

Ptp/9: This is what I heard from a foreigner and I fully agree with him, he told me if you met me ten years ago, and I heard two Emiratis talk, I would not understand anything. But now, when you all speak you insert some Anglo-Saxon vocabulary. I started to think, and I was very curious. Now when I thought about it, the first thing that came to my mind was the word week-end, a week-end, we would never say

Week-end in Arabic but we all use the word week-end in English. We even put the first two Arabic letters and then say the English word week-end. The English language has encroached on the Arabic language, encroached.

Int: OK if you said encroached, that the English language has encroached on the Arabic language, where do you think this has left the Arabic language.

Ptp/10: The Arabic language will always be there, will remain forever, It is impossible for the Arabic language to vanish because the biggest elements of any civilization is the language and religion. Our mother tongue is the Arabic language, and our Islamic religion is in Arabic so our civilization and our language can never vanish. This is the first reason; the second reason is that as long as we have generations being brought up on our heritage, we will always have the Arabic language.

Int: Do you talk more Arabic or English in a day

Ptp/11: I speak more Arabic

Int: With whom?

Ptp/12: With my family, but I speak more English during work

Int: Is it because you have many foreigners in your work or do you speak English with Arabs too?

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Ptp/13: No at work, among us Arabs we sometimes say a certain idea in English because it is easier and the message is communicated clearer when said in English. I have an Arab colleague when I am explaining something technical I cannot use the Arabic language, for example if I said you will find the file in the hard disc. I cannot say hard disc in Arabic (Al kose el Salbi) it is very difficult. These are daily, technical things; they force us to use English. For example the blue tooth...

Int: OK let us say in the coming generations, when your children are in school and are growing up, where and how you see the Arabic and the English language being use.

Ptp/14: I see students now coming out of school, even Arab students, they all speak English. I blame both the schools and the universities for the low Arabic levels

Int: How do you see that?

Ptp/15: This definitely affects negatively on the Arabic language because not using something much is an indication of it being less important. That is if the Arabic language is used less and less, it means it is becoming less and less important. But I come back and say that the Arabic language can never vanish but it will become less and less important.

Int: So, for you, when it becomes less and less important, is this vital for you personally or not.

Ptp/16: Certainly it is vital, it is dangerous

Int: So you said that that the Arabic language, when it loses importance, you find that dangerous, tell me why and what can you do about it

Ptp/17: First the daily life now, its developing, I mean as regards technology and so on. Second, on the education side, the English language is increasing; now Science and Math are being taught in English in schools. The student or the teenager, how does he spend his free time? Does he read an Arabic book to one of our famous authors like Khalil Jubran, or a poem by Prince Faisal for instance. No he is always on face book, or twitter or blackberry. This blackberry, do they make it in English or Arabic language? They have it in Arabic but nobody puts the Arabic language. I personally put mine in English because from the aesthetical point of view it is better, it looks better.

Int: it looks aesthetically better for you? So people can see you?

Ptp/18: Frankly yes, Second, many people, and I am one of them, frankly I do not much understand in it, but some people try to translate every word in it to Arabic, by the way I personally like old sayings. Like now we have everything in English, the computers, the

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TV, when we want to know the news we turn to BBC or CNN why don't we turn to Al Jezira or Al Arabia channels

Int: Why?

Ptp/19: because frankly I feel more at ease and relaxed. Look I want to tell you something, I am tri-lingual, I know how to speak Arabic, English and French. Now English has opened a door for me, French opened another door for me, as for Arabic I feel I reached my limit in it, I cannot go any further. I have reached saturation, in English we say saturation. But el hamdo lelah, I know someone who is totally Bedouin which means he is an Emirati pure, but he does not like to dress in our national costume. He said I feel more relaxed in non-national dress. He does not like to read old Arabic poems or listen to our traditional songs, no he listens to English songs. Can we link this to his mental state? Is it because he thinks and behaves like this, he does not pray. Is it because he is too open, sometimes, even with me personally, he prefers to be around foreigners more than being with people of his own flesh and blood. I see this as being something very passive. How can he let go of his national identity. When I am out of the UAE, I am so proud to say I am from UAE. I become very happy when someone tells me I do not know Emirates, it gives me the opportunity to sit with them and explain and give explanations and information because when I am outside or abroad I am a symbol of my country. Whether I am abroad for work or pleasure I am still a symbol of my country. I cannot understand that some people let go and leave their identity because they admire another culture.

Int: This is my last question, do you see the Emirati identity, to which you belong, and are so proud of, do you see the Emirati identity under any threat from the English language and as you said that Arabic is becoming less and less important

Ptp/20: I have blind trust in the Emirati identity. I have 100/100 trust in the Emirati identity. Insha Allah, and if we look at the Emirati society and the English language has encroached to the maximum in it, I say that the Emirati society no matter what happens, it is impossible to change. Why, I am telling you that since I was a youngster in school, I learned two things; What is your religion and what is your country. This is what I learned. I was taught that I am an Emirati Muslim. And now that I have grown up, I learn more and more that the Emirati identity is not something cheap, or common. It is our duty to safeguard the Emirati identity. I have travelled much, and mastered English and French, but my love to my country never changed, on the contrary my travelling has made me love my country more. I have to end by reminding that our father said – Sheikh Zayed may god rest his soul in peace – told us when we were young children, if you do not have a past, you will never have a present or a future.

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Participant four

Interview Transcripts

Int: The first question I always like to start with is what does it mean to be an Emirati? For example I am Egyptian, so when I say I am Egyptian it means so much to me, it makes me feel many different things, Now you are an Emirati, so what does that mean to you?

Ptp/1: The first thing that comes to mind is being proud. I feel a very great feeling, that I am the daughter of this country. I represent my country. I feel... It's a feeling that cannot be described. I feel, I feel being Emirati is the language, the identity, the clothes, the traditions, I feel they all come together in the word Emirati. When anyone asks me the question what do you feel being an Emirati, I feel.

I feel when I speak, although we all speak Arabic yet we have some words in our language which is English like the words "light" and "charge" Words said in English, these words are taken from English words, like the word "Sida" which means straight, this is catastrophic, it is true we live in Emirates but we got influenced by the people, by the culture, by the language, do you understand me? My father always wants me to speak Arabic, like when I say "light" he says no, it is not called "light" it is called "Nour". So you see although my father is a medical doctor and knows very good English, but he wants us to speak Arabic. So you know when he is in the hospital, they all speak English. But when he is at home, and I speak with him and I say a word in English he gets very upset and says you are an Arab you should speak Arabic, it is your language and you should be proud of it. When you are speaking, you speak Arabic all the way or English, but do not put them together, do not use one word here and there of another language.

Int: You said that when an Emirati speaks he mixes English words with the Arabic language, like introducing 'light" or "charge". When this happens, do you like it or not.

Ptp/2: No

Int: How does it make you feel when this happens?

Ptp/3: Bad

Int: Do you see a connection between the identity and the language?

Ptp/4: Yes

Int: How do you see this thing influencing identity?

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Ptp/5: Yes, this is a reality and we must all accept it. As for me personally, I do not have a problem because it has become a fact. But what is annoying me very much is that we have been greatly influenced by the English language. When I look around me at work, we have so many foreigners around. OK we should learn English, but look around you. Our children now, when we take them to schools, their Arabic language is destroyed. Look around you here in Abu Dhabi we have too many foreigners. Even in our school curriculum, Science and Math is now even being taught in English. My sister-in-law is now studying to become a teacher in university and she told me we are taught to teach Science and Math in English, so where is the Arabic language?

Int: How does that make you feel?

Ptp: I like to have a fair balance between the Arabic and English language. What is annoying me very much is that English now is over-riding Arabic. Look for instance if you asked me now to write a "paragraph" see I forgot the Arabic word and had to say it in English. If you ask me now to write an article in Arabic or an essay, I would be afraid because I, like if you give me now an exam in the Arabic grammar, I am sure I would fail, I cannot. But if you give me an exam in English grammar I would get you a good mark, this is what is annoying me. There are a certain words, you will not believe me, when I am talking with my friend, I cannot find the Arabic word so I resort to English. Can you understand me, I sometimes find myself I cannot express myself in Arabic so I express myself in English.

Int: How to you see this on the Emirati identity?

Ptp/7: Negative. Because it does not only stop at the language, it is also influencing our thoughts, our clothes, our culture, and many things. Look at the clothes, it is true that our Emirati girls are wearing the national clothes, but they have their national clothes open and you can see from under they are wearing, OK we know that your identity is your Abaya, your head cover you should have a certain look. But now they are wearing the Abaya just like that but underneath our national back Abaya they are wearing colors, wearing stretch pants, their hair is spiky and colours and colours and when I see them I say to myself she is not Emirati, she is not a Muslim. Real Emiratis do not do this.

Moreover, I am noticing that the foreigners do not only plant in us their language, but other things like the mixing between boys and girls. Now even in England, I heard, they are starting to segregate between boys and girls in schools. Having co-education is a very dangers matter especially for girls and we hear so much horrible things happening in schools that are mixed. This annoys me very much. I pray God and ask him to protect our future generations, I do not know what could happen later on.

Int: So you see that all what is happening and the picture you just described is due to the English language or what?

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Ptp/8: It is due to the western culture in general. I am not against bringing in foreigners, they teach us their language, this is something good, but, I feel that the foreigners here, how can I explain this, I feel they are starting to prefer foreigners more than us locals, I am so sorry to say this.

I am not saying foreigners should not come, but look now, they have preference over the Emiratis, look for instance at their salaries, in many instances they take much more than us in work. I feel this is so unfair. And I see all this connected together

Int: I fully understand what you are saying, now do you see any challenges facing the Emirati citizen?

Ptp/9: Education, the education system is schools must change. It must be better.

Int: How?

Ptp/10: For instance look at the Islamic teaching; things have changed now since I was in school. At our time, they used to focus and concentrate more on the Islamic Education and the Arabic language.

Int: Tell me how it differed from the time you were in school and now, say with your nephews?

Ptp/11: My nephew has very weak Arabic language. The subjects taught in English are much more than the subjects taught in Arabic. The foreigners in his school focus on the English language much more. Because you see the teachers are foreigners, not Arabs teaching English but foreigners, moreover they emphasize and focus on English not Arabic. So we I study to my nephew, when I teach him Arabic I have to repeat 20 or 30 times, but in English without any help he gets a full mark.

Int: What is the reason for this? Why do you think you took much better Arabic and Islamic education than your nephew?

Ptp/12: It is because of the family. I will tell you the truth. When I was in high school, I was very clever in Arabic, coming out of school. But once I entered university, everything was in English except for one subject only in Arabic. I felt my English language developed while my Arabic language became much less. In the university, I talked English to my friends, I talked English everywhere, even my family at home said to me what has happened to you, I got influenced from too much English. I hold families responsible. They do not focus with their children on learning and teaching Arabic. Look at the mothers now, when choosing a school for their children, they want the best school that teaches English. They say I want top English levels, and when I asked them how about the Arabic, they say we are Arabs and by time they will pick up the Arabic language. One of my colleagues told me why do you put your nephews in a

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school that focuses on Arabic, you should choose a good English school and Arabic will come eventually. I reply that now all the children speak broken Arabic what will happen to them in the future.

Int: You are not happy about the Arabic language now in UAE?

Ptp/13: No, I am very annoyed and angry

Int: Then, who should do what to elevate this anger inside you?

Ptp/14: The Family. If the mother does not concentrate with her child about the Arabic language. Even if mothers give their children Arabic courses, or just give them Arabic books to read or educational films, if the schools are no good. The mother and the home is important. Second comes the school.

Int: What do you want from the schools?

Ptp/15: I want them to concentrate a bit more on the Arabic language or even strike a balance between English and Arabic. They should also pay much more attention to the Islamic education.

Int: What do you exactly mean by paying much more attention?

Ptp/16: They should develop curriculum, they should develop the Arabic language and the Islamic education to make it more attractive to the children.

Int: So you said the home and the school, who else is responsible for the status of the Arabic language and as you said to develop its curriculum?

Ptp/17: The responsible officials too I mean these people know what should be done and I am sure and they listen to the complaints of parents and how Arabic is weak in schools. Did you see the popular program “Step”, during a school visit they asked a young student whether he knew Arabic and he said yes, then they asked him to say a word that starts with a “Sh” in Arabic and the student answered “shoes”. This shows you how imbalanced the two languages are in our schools.

I hope all stake holders concentrate. But even if we develop an upgrade the Arabic curriculum in schools, if the parents at home do not emphasize the Arabic language, then there is no hope.

Int: My last language, now if we say Culture, Language and Identity, how do you see the three, are they linked or not, do they influence each other or not

Ptp/18: Yes, they are directly related. I told you, the culture influenced the identity and the language. For example, as I told you the western culture influenced our Emirati

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identity and our Arabic language. Emirati culture which is clothes, habits and traditions, and almost everything, has been affected by the western culture. They are very closely connected.

Int: So you think if we correct one of them the other two will be corrected or influenced?

Ptp/19: This depends on the individual himself. If the person is of weak personality, and just follows others, this person will never be properly corrected, but if he has logical reasoning and thinks correctly. He should say to himself I am a Muslim, as an Emirati, as a son or daughter of this country, he should think that he may negatively or positively affect the coming generations, then he should know how to correct himself.

I personally feel that it all goes back to the individual himself and how he thinks. Now if you have a group of Emiratis, and who get exposed to the western culture, and as we know this western culture makes us doubt our Islamic religion. This is very well known, the western culture keeps on and one to make us doubt our religion, our head covers, in everything we believe in.

Int: How?

Ptp/20: Look for instance at Star Academy. This was in the west. It is originally in the west. They bring a band and the women and men sit together singing and God knows what happens later on. I once saw a talk-show that brought a man who said Israel wants to destroy the Arab woman. Why? Because women are the basis of any community or society. A good strong woman builds a good strong society. In addition, they import to us films that show us it's OK for men and women to be together.

Look how the west are now affecting and influencing the Arab woman in general. See how they are even trying to make us doubt our own Islamic religion. So I go back and tell you that it all depends on the individual himself. There are people until now who are very much holding firmly to our Islamic teachings.

Int: Thank you very much for your time

Ptp/21: you are most welcome.

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Participant five

Interview Transcripts

Int: If I say you are an Emirati, what does that mean to you?

PTP/1 It is very unique. Yesterday I attended a stand-up comedy show. The man was making fun of Emiratis and other nationalities. So he asked one of the audience where are you from, the man answered I am from India. Then the comedian asked how long have you lived here, and the man answered I was born here (said in English). So the comedian responded you seem happy because you were born here, but you are still Indian. You are not Emirati. This is what I like about Emiratis, they are very closed. Even if you are born and brought up here, you will never be an Emirati (said in English). So the poor man felt bad, and the camera zoomed in on him. I was surprised. It made me think, even if you are born here, even with everything you can never be an Emirati. Because we have people around us here they just have the name but they are not Emiratis.

Int: When you say I am Emirati what do you feel?

Ptp/2: History. When I ask someone if he is Emirati, I say is your father and grandfather and great grandfather Emiratis? I expect them to have a history. It has more value.

Int: What does it mean it has more value?

Ptp/3: More Emirati. It is a difficult question; I cannot answer this question (said in English). It is not built on facts, its more emotions. Like we had an Emirati Law which stipulated that an Emirati man cannot marry a non-Emirati woman because their children will not be Emirati. So it made me think about this issue. Although I know people whose mothers are not Emiratis and they are more Emirati than I am. Yet I was proud of them (said in English), when they go outside they represent Emirates very well.

Int: Now you know, English, and you know people who know English or who are learning English. Now how do you see the Western culture when it comes in contact with the Emirati identity? What happens then?

Ptp/4: It takes it out of its path. It takes the Emirati identity out of its path. But I think to a positive direction and not to a bad one. There are advantages (said in English) that we take from it and we develop. It can be both bad and good

Int: How? Tell me

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Ptp/5: We should take from them what is good and we develop it and it goes on, Int: If I say there are challenges facing an Emirati when he effaces the western culture, what do you think these challenges may be? Or may you think there are no challenges

Ptp/6: Let us look at it. There habits and traditions are different then us, their ways are different, their principles are different, their approach is different (said in English).

Int: When you first learned English, did you see and notice these differences? I mean the differences between the Emirati and the western cultures?

Ptp/7: Yes there are challenges, first think when Emiratis start learning English they do not want to speak it. And if they like it they do not want to confess they like it.

Int: Why?

Ptp/8: Because he feels he needs to hold on to his own identity. While others feel, no, we like the new language. For example, yesterday I was giving a workshop in Ajman university, and I was speaking English. I noticed a student who said you must speak Arabic, we are all Arab speakers here, so why talk English. So I said fine, and I talked in Arabic. But the official teaching language of the university is English. Then, although this was a university, its official language was English, they study in English, but they did not want me to speak English, they did not want English, they did not. They wanted me to speak Arabic.

Int: What was the workshop about?

Ptp/9: It was about Engineering. These were students of first year in the university. They did not want me to speak English. But my other workshop, I had to speak English because there was a student from Iran and he did not speak Arabic. So I noticed a female student just sitting there. Not answering questions and not responding to me. She looked like she did not understand what I was saying. So I went up to her and I asked her why she does not answer me, she said I only answer in Arabic, and she was an Emirati. I got surprised; it is a university that teaches in English. So I talked to her in Arabic. She did not want me to speak or teach in English. She did not want. So for me it was fine, but when you teach Engineering there are certain terms you must say in English, but I spoke to her in Arabic because she did not want to be taught in English.

Int: Then what happened?

Ptp/10: The students later had to give a ten minute presentation in English, and this female student came to the board and gave her ten minute presentation in English. I was surprised because I thought she did not know English. But she spoke very good English during her presentation.

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Int: From your point of view, why do you think these students did not want you to speak English although the official teaching language of the university is English? Why do you think they are opposing the English language?

Ptp/11: I never thought of it but may be because I am Emirati like them, they want me to speak our language, the Arabic language.

Int: Now we move to another point, the word culture, what does Emirati culture mean to you?

Ptp/12: Religion, the first thing that comes to mind when you say Emirati culture is Religion, the next thing is our Heritage

Int: So when we say western culture, what does that mean to you?

Ptp13: Business, Art, and tourism what I take from them, the international business (said in English)

Int: Do you think that an Emirati now, living here, can stay without learning English?

Ptp/14: I got surprised when I met a female student in my class, who looks Emirati, talks Emirati, and I found out she was Canadian. She originally was Emirati but has the Canadian nationality. I think she may be the only one. It is a mix up. I see much mix up in this university. But because here is a foreign university you see all sorts of things. But for instance in Al Ain, the Emirates university is a government university all the students are Emiratis you would not see such things But here, in the foreign university you see a big mix..

Int: Fine, this mix you speak about what does it do to the Emirati identity?

Ptp/15: It distorts it, yes it distorts many times. Like sometimes here they like the western culture but do not say it, they do not want to say it. For instance, I do not know, they fear it will influence them, I do not know

Int: How?

PTP/16 They like it, they want to experience the other civilizations, so why be afraid, I think they should try it, and admit it, why the fear.

Int: What do you think they are afraid of?

PTP/17 They fear if they admit it, people will tell them why did you change, why did you leave your own culture

Int: So he is afraid of peoples' talk about him. Why is that so?

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PTP/18 Yes this is community or society pressure (said in English). I even say to some if you want to marry a non-Emirati, why not go ahead and do it. Open this dialogue. I see other cultures have great dialogues between the parents and their children, this is good. For example, in the western world, the parents ask the child what do you want to eat, and the child answers I want this I want that. Why not, but here we say eat this. Our parents here I find them thorough (said in English). They say to the child come and eat. Although this open dialogue is in our religion, but. So when I go abroad and see them treat their children like this, I wonder how they do that. This is something good, nice, when I treat my child like this, this is something good.

Int: So you take from the western culture what suits you and you do it

PTP/19 I treat my children like that. I teach them how to be responsible. These are things I take from the western culture and do it at my home.

Int: Now you have gone abroad, came in contact with the western culture, what do you think may have a negative effect on the Emirati identity from this contact or this exposure?

Ptp/20 When I travel abroad, and may be someone is sitting with me on the same table, and he starts drinking alcoholic beverages I tell him I do not want to see this on my table. So they get surprised because for them it is very normal they drink. I tell them, so it is I who is influencing them but another Emirati may feel embarrassed to tell them. I learned from my travels to have courage, to tell them what does not suit me. I always tell them the things that I do not accept. Like other instances, when I visit someone in their home, the wife of the man would come and kiss me, and I say sorry, I do not kiss females. This is not in our religion or culture. So I teach them something new for them. I say no, we have traditions that I cannot forget or delete; we do not do this in our culture. He said you do not kiss women? I said yes, I kiss my wife but not another man's wife. So they laughed. What is nice about them is that when such things happen, they do get surprised, but they do not get angry. On the contrary, here if similar things happen, we all get upset and angry. So I learned that. There is a big culture shock. Big culture shock but the big culture shock is to them. So when I go and travel places, and I do get a culture shock, I learn, I do not get upset, may be surprised, but I do not get angry.

Int: So if we take an Emirati living here in Emirates, where he is the minority, because we see here that the foreigners are much more than the Emiratis, and the western culture is all around you here inside the country, What do you think can affect or influence the Emirati identity inside the country?

Ptp/21: I do not know, like what?

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Int: The word culture has so much, like clothes, eating habits, traditions, so much. How do you see all this being affected by the western culture?

Ptp/22: If one is educated you can make the correct choices, but if one has not finished his education, then he can easily fall into one of these nets, he may change his words, his attitude his culture (said in English). But if one is educated, he sees these things and can get out of them. But people must learn, we must enter into new experiences, we must try.

Int: Do you see any negatives or positives from the exposure to the western culture?

Ptp/24: Look at me, I talk English, I may sometimes wear a jeans and a hat, but I do not change inside. It is fine to change for a while, I do not like to be monotony (said in English). I feel it is nice to change every now and then. But the others who enter into these western nets they go in and never come out. Finish. Life is full of nets, we should enter into one and go out, it is experiences in life. Yes I am optimistic, I always put positive energy in front of me (said in English). I like people to try and learn, For instance if an Emirati would come to say I want to marry a non-Emirati woman, I would say yes, go ahead, do it. Try yourself, see for yourself if you are happy or not. Take this adventure; take the risk (said in English) go and learn, observe, see, etc. Try to wear their clothes, speak their language, and do everything. If you like it, keep it if not then change it.

Int: If he continues to stay in the western net, would you be happy or sad?

Ptp/25: No I would be happy, because if he continues that means he was not a true Emirati in the beginning. For instance I would give you an example, I know someone who talks in the Bedouin style of talk. I look at him, the way, as if he is Bedouin, this is my brother Mohamed, we are not Bedouins, but he likes to talk like them. Why do you want to be someone else, why don't you be the real you, I learned it is because all his friends talk this way, so he wants to imitate them. So when I hear him speak I laugh, he is only imitating his friends. I tell him be normal. When he talks with me, he is relaxed (said in English) so he talks normally. It becomes very obvious if one tries to be like that, it shows, I always say yes you must be Emirati, but from inside, because if you put on a different way it shows. Sometimes I see Emirati youngsters talk differently, their ways is different, and their clothes are different. Like the way our grandparents talk, it is different than us now, like you have old English and new English (said in English). If an Emirati opens an Emirati Restaurant, or goes into Arts, these things make me proud. These things are nice, but only if they do it out of truly being Emirati not only to raise the Emirati flag.

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Int: My last question, is about the Arabic language. Where do you see it now in this country? Why do you think the President announced in 2008 the year of the Arabic language?

Ptp/26: I like this very much. I like to see the Arabic language getting bigger

Int: How?

Ptp/27: Look at the Arabic language now, everyone writes emails, and messages in English. To tell you the truth, I sometimes get messages in Arabic but I do not read them. Look at any international event (said in English), you find Arabic comes as a secondary language, secondary language. Where ever you go, here or there, in the universities. In this university, the Arabic language is secondary, the first language is French, and English is for the Masters degrees.

Int: So if we go out of this university, where do you see the Arabic language?

Ptp/28: The Arabic language does exist, but look at the books, there are all in English, the computer programs are all in English. The new things, the technology, the day to day life (said in English). Even we say look at this car, its navigation (said in English), so everything is in English, nothing is in Arabic. When will I say Arabic is first, if a foreigner comes here and gets so surprised, like in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabic, everyone speaks Arabic, when a foreigner enters, they all speak Arabic. So the foreigners start to panic (said in English). If this happens here then I would say Arabic is here and we are Arabs truly. Take in Japan, I ask where is the metro, train (said in English), no answer then I start using my hand language so he can understand me.

Int: Now you gave an example of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabic and compared it to Emirates, in your opinion which is better when it comes to the Arabic language.

Ptp/29: I would prefer that we become like the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia but I also want to master the English language. Like when I go to France and speak English, they laugh at me, and say you know French. Yes I do, so they force me to speak French, the same thing in Germany. They speak to me in German, then I say sorry I do not know German, and I know they hold onto their language.

Int: You said the German hold onto their language; do you think the Emiratis hold on to their Arabic?

Ptp/30: No and this is not good at all. In Saudi everything is in Arabic, but this is the extreme. I like moderation, and I want to see it here in my country. For Example and a good example is in Sharjah Emirate, they write the Arabic text 60% big and the English 40%. This is good, they tell you if you want to open a business, the name must be an Arabic name. I like this way of thinking, but this is only in Sharjah, I wish it would be

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in the entire country. What this law is saying is that Arabic is dominant (said in English). Not only that Arabic is up and English is down, no it is bigger in fonts. I like that very much and the name must be Arabic. Like for instance my office is called Centimeter Cube (said in English) I cannot register it in Sharjah or else I would have to translate the name

Int: So you think a year or a day celebrating the Arabic language is a good idea?

Ptp/31: Yes but it is not enough, it has to be in schools, and you must start with the youngsters around ten or twelve years of age. I remember when I was twelve I took zero in Arabic spelling. I remember I had an Egyptian teacher, who was teaching us how to write Arabic calligraphy, then he gave us a spelling test and I got a zero and he started shouting at me. I remember this age. It is a good age to start teaching our children the Arabic language, in schools, from arcade games, from anything. The country should not allow importation of any game, or car, unless it is in Arabic. Look at China, they control everything. We should do the same. It should start from the decision makers, from the laws, Arabic should exist in everything.

Int: Tell me why you are not happy because Arabic is not everywhere as you said.

Ptp/32: I had the same thoughts, when I had a magazine, I used to publish it in both Arabic and English my idea was that when an English reader reads he it sees the Arabic he knows that Arabic is there. I contacted the computer company Apple and asked them where the Arabic programs, why didn't you upgrade them, I am in continuous contact with them. I wish Arabic would be much more important, with my due respect to all other languages, I want Arabic to be more important and more significant. When I receive a foreign visitor in my country, I want to tell him about my own traditions and I want him to see my culture, my books, my writings my habits in my language.

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Participant six

Interview Transcripts

Int: When I say you are an Emirati, What do you feel? What is the first word that comes to mind? His soul in peace,

PTP/1 The first word that comes to my mind is Pride.

Int: Why do you feel Pride when you say I am Emirati?

Ptp/2: because I am from Zayed children, God rest his soul, I am proud because I was born in a country, its leader united, during the unity of the nation, our country is still young, the unity is young, but we have gone a long way. I am proud because I live in this country where its people love its leaders which is quite rare in all the other countries. I noticed it when a foreigner, a colleague said you are the only country where I see the people love their rules. It is strange I see the **passion in their eyes (said in English)**. The day when they see, for instance, when we see Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed, and we get so happy when we see their accomplishments.

Int: What else do you feel?

Ptp/3: I feel patriotism. No matter where you live you always have a feeling of belonging to the country you were born in. I am proud because I belong to this nation that is why I am proud.

Int: When you learned English, did you feel that you subjected to the western culture or not?

Ptp/4: Yes I felt the different. When I was in school, I did not see or feel much that the western culture is too much or too strong, why because all our teachers were Arabs, and not like now. Look now, anywhere you go, in restaurants, in shops, TV, we are surrounded by the western culture. For example when you look at an elderly lady, when she goes to the market, she has to speak English, or a restaurant, you would get shocked when she says, **can I have one chicken sandwich (said in English)**. This she has to do by force. We are in a country that has so many cultures, and we have we have so many different nationalities. So the only means of communication is English. The fact that we are a minority, I feel this affects on our culture, but before there was not that much effect.

Int: So you said the western culture is affecting, is this effect positive or negative?

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Ptp/5: It all depends on the individual himself. If the person understands his traditions for example, the Shela and Abaya. If you are wearing it for your religion, no matter how hard they try, you will keep your Hejab and you will never show your hair. But now what is happening is that many I have noticed that the western fashion and the hair is shown from under the head cover, they put so much make-up. This way I see a big effect of the western culture on us. Before this never happened or they were a few, not they are too many and those with a real Hejab have become a few. This is because how much one is holding onto his traditions. The new generations are not holding onto their own culture as the ones before them.

Int: And is this bother you personally?

Ptp/6: I get very angry if the parents do not teach their children how to hold onto their own traditions, because if this does not happen, I feel year after year, our traditions may vanish. So the most important thing is that it is taught from one generation to the other. The habits, the traditions, and the Emirati culture must be transferred from one generation to the other.

Int: So you see and believe that the Emirati habits, traditions and culture, if it is not transferred from generation to the other it may vanish?

Ptp/7: Yes

Int: Now having said that, where do you see the Emirati identity going? If things stay as they are and as you have just described them, how do you see the Emirati identity? Because you said the western identity is increasing and increasing. I see, until now we still have an Emirati identity, all are holding onto the Emirati identity, we still have a feeling of belonging ... look at the schools... the school administration, they did not want to introduce foreign teachers in our schools.

Int: Until Now?

Ptp/9: No in the past we did not have foreign teachers, and now they are there but they are not welcomed, nobody wanted them. We are afraid. The new generations may pick up from their traditions and habits, they may see the western traditions as normal and they are wrong, they are originally wrong, but they will see it normal, because now we have globalization. In the past, when we used to see a foreigner, we wanted to talk with him and train ourselves in English, but now everything is changed, but now, I think it is the minority who have changed, like when I see the men, like the Emirati men who wear jeans, T-shirt and a cap, when they walk, most of the people look at them and say what is this, because he represents the minority. If it was normal, people would not look at them. But in Dubai it is very different, because in Dubai they have more and more

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foreigners and they have a wider collection of cultures so you notice the Emiratis are more influenced and affected.

Int: Do you see there is a relationship or a connection between language, culture and identity? I am talking about the Emirati language which is Arabic, the Emirati culture and identity.

PTP/10 Yes there is a connection between them, but not a very strong one. The Arabic language does not affect much on the identity. And if you were a person who understands these things, language will not be affected. But it also depends on other factors.

Int: Other factors, like what?

PTP/11: For example, all the satellite channels now, the internet, the foreign people, these I consider more influential than the language itself

Int: Do you see the Arabic language now, is it in its right place in your view. Where do you see the Arabic language in the Emirates now?

PTP/12 As a government, I like what they did, why? Because they have forced all the government authorities and official bodies to write all their correspondences in Arabic, all the traffic signs are now in Arabic, this is what I like. When they ignore the Arabic language, and put only English, then this is a problem. The second thing, we during all our dealings with others and in universities, the dominant language is English, and at work, the work environment all the communication is in English, then if you come and write an email in Arabic, you will face difficulties because you are not using the Arabic language. The Emirati colloquial language is much easier but when we speak of the classical Arabic, it is much more difficult.

Int: Is this something that is annoying you or making you happy?

PTP/13: No of course it makes me annoyed. Thank God, when I started I found it quite difficult but when I was forced to write official correspondences in Arabic, every time I would write, I would let someone review my writings, Thank God I became much better. Although when I was still in school, I used to write Arabic essays very well. But once we entered university, things changed. What I would like to see is that an Arabic subject is taught in universities. Look now, the English language is everywhere. They give you courses to improve your English language skills but nothing in Arabic. When I entered university my Arabic was fine, but once in university it was only one subject, and there was no sustainability to study Arabic.

Int: So according to what you said you are not happy with the status or level of Arabic in this country, so what can be done to improve this situation?

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PTP/14: I personally feel, like if I am now looking for work, frankly, I have to be proficient in English because now, your strong points are how much you master the English language, it is a communication language, So what I see, is that during school and university education, as there is a concentration on teaching the English language, there should be a similar focus on teaching Arabic. I mean even if you are studying all your specialized courses in English, there should be at least one course to be taught in Arabic. Once we enter university, four years of our lives, everything is in English, all the teachings are in the English language, all the projects are in the English language, the communication with all teachers is in English language, so the concentration is all on the English language. No focus on Arabic, we took only one subject in Arabic in one semester and that was the end of it. Now notice, that I did well, but many of my colleagues, especially those who came from foreign or language schools, failed their Arabic course or they found it very difficult.

Int: Was it an Arabic language course?

PTP/15: It contained simple research writing in Arabic, Power point presentations, grammar, but all in very simple language. But there was no concentration. In this thing had they focused on the Arabic language, at least they should have so they prepare us for the work environment, writing correspondences in Arabic. English they used to repeat the same exercises, and they used to keep on and sustain the teaching in the English language. The information was always available. When we came to work, again it is the same, everything is in the English language, because we are used to using the English language, we had no choice, may be, and as a professional development, and for employees to increase their self confidence, to be able to use the Arabic language, just like they give them professional training to develop their English, why don't they give the same professional development to develop their Arabic language, just like they provide professional development to train on computer skills. Why not even give credit courses in the university for Arabic subjects, Arabic courses. What is important that there should be maintenance, sustainability, so the information is always there.

Int: Do you see any challenges facing the Emiratis. Like you said, globalization and the country now has so many foreigners who speak English, what are the challenges? Or maybe there are no challenges.

PTP/16: One of the challenges is that that exposure to the western culture, they may think it is right. This is a challenge facing parents, they should stop their globalization. For example, before, we used to have more censorship on satellite channels, programs were many not allowed to be aired, and when they were, many scenes were censored and taken off. But now, censorship is minimum, because we can control our own government channels, and cannot control what is shown on satellite channels, they are too exposed, like Arab satellite or Nile satellite, especially Orbit, although they have age

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restrictions on certain movies or programmes, and parental guidance, yet the problem now is that everything became so easy. Now in the cinemas, we used to see many scenes taken off, to the extent may be half the film is chopped off. They would take off anything that goes against our traditions, habits or way of thinking. Or obscene scenes.

Because we do have challenges and are surrounded with so many different cultures, we are obliged to shut up, I mean like for example take alcohol, why do we allow the sale of alcohol in our country, we allow it because there are many foreigners. These foreigners are given a liquor licence to buy it, but we see some Emiratis, unfortunately, go and buy it. Another example, are the cinema theatres, we have them like this, because these foreigners are coming from their countries with their habits and traditions and we do not want to deprive them for it. Now we have freedom for them, and this freedom is affecting us Emiratis.

We, represent a generation from before, we used to hold onto our traditions, but now this new generation, I am afraid for the new generation, the coming generation because they are born in this environment, they are born in a foreign environment, they are born to view all these different satellites. They now see that going to the cinema theatres as normal; they hear the word liquor as normal. In the past when we just heard the word we used to get chocked. Last time I went to Spinney's supermarket, and I went into the back door, I saw the big label Liquor, I got chocked, and immediately closed the door. All these things are challenges that the new generations have to meet.

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Participant seven

Interview Transcripts

Int: When I say you are an Emirati. What does that mean to you? What does the Emirati identity mean to you?

PTP/1: It is not a word, it is an image, and I think it is an image that comes to all Emiratis when they hear that word. It is Zayed, our late ruler and leader. May be not to the new generations it could mean something else or someone else, but for my generation it means Zayed.

Int: Why Zayed?

Ptp/2: Because we were born and brought up to know that there is only Zayed, a rule is Zayed and cannot be anything else. This is what it means to be Emirati. Our pride comes from Zayed. As if the nation's achievements and accomplishments are our achievements, they taught us like this. We are all one. We always say We did this, We did big projects, we did that, as if we did it not the country. We do not see that the nation and us are two, but one. We never say the country did this, but we say we did it as if we are the ones who accomplished these achievements.

Int: What does that make you feel?

Ptp/3: Great pride, great pride. **Like it never crossed my mind (said in English)**, the idea never came to mind that I would take another nationality, or have another passport, no matter what are the rights they may have, or the privileges they may have. Because it is enough pride, you are a part of a nation's achievements, and that I do not only belong to this nation but also to its people.

Int: Tell me when you learned English in school, did you feel that you were being subjected to the western culture?

Ptp/4: I got my schooling in a government school, not a language school, so we used to learn English only as of grade four. They used to introduce English only at grade four, they used to start with the mother tongue, which is Arabic, and which is correct, then introduce English at grade four. Then they changed and start English earlier. But until then, they were teaching English in Arabic.

Int: How?

Ptp/5: I mean only Arabic teachers were available to teach us English. So the concept of western culture was not there. This concept only came when the foreigners came and

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started teaching us English. So the concept of western culture came with the foreigners. Then poor Arabic paid the price.

Int: When did you realize or notice that the western culture started to influence you or affect you in any way?

Ptp/6: In the university. This was my first encounter. This was the first time I dealt with foreigners. I felt in the university that I have entered a society and community where I have become a minority. I remember the first time I noticed their culture, because before that, I never noticed there were any other cultures. I used to tell my English teacher in the university, I hate English, I hate English, she said to me I will give you a book, and when you finish it we will talk about that again. Once you finish it we will see and talk whether you can learn English or not learn English. So she gave me a book, it was an autobiography, the book what called "The Child called It". Ok. I didn't know then how to read good English; the teacher was trying to challenge me. I remember I stayed and kept reading the book until 3:00am, until I finished it in a day, when I never read a book in English (said in English).

Int: Did you get so much attracted to the book?

Ptp/7: Yes it was an autobiography. You know for us when you have a tragedy in the house, you see and live it and not talk about it. So I was surprised about this person who had a tragedy in the house, and went public with it. So I realized that this was their culture which is different than ours. I learned that when they have a problem they go out and talk about it. That was the first time I said to myself, this is what you do, one time, but you do it differently. But I never actually felt I was affected by their culture. Never, I always feel that, I will not say we have a complete culture, but our religion, filled the gap in any cultures around us. I always felt I have a complete culture because it is completed by our religion.

Int: Fine, how do you see religion is connected to language and culture?

Ptp/8: Culture as in habits and traditions?

Int: What does culture mean to you? How would you define Emirati culture?

Ptp/9: I feel Emirati culture is derived from religion. In every country I believe that their culture comes from their religion. Then part of culture is habits and traditions. Then comes our Emirati identity. How we are, where we come from? How we deal with people? Our religion? All this is our Emirati culture.

Int: How would you define the Emirati identity?

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PTP/10: At the end, it is who am, after all this integration of language, religion, habits and traditions, who am I, and we are all different.

Int: When you see a foreigner, say it is his first visit to Emirates, and he asks you to identify the Emirati identity, what would you say to him?

PTP/11: Frankly, I will not go away from our late ruler Sheikh Zayed, we are the past, present and future, seriously I do not understand, I mean I know of no country who knows what is going to happen in the future. We are a nation who knows what is going to happen in 2030. We are a nation who lives its present for its future. And we are living the present because of our past. This is Emirates. We have history; we have a past, and a present and a future. I always say it. I challenge any foreigner if they know what is going to happen in their future, their countries did not plan their future. What is your biggest problem who is going to come as president after four years. Then when their precedence comes, he plans their future for four years, then they change and another one comes and changes their future.

Int: We say that in Emirates, demographically, the Emiratis are a minority in their home land. Now do you see this comprising any challenges on the Emirati identity, or language or culture or religion?

PTP/12: Definitely. Because we now live in globalization, You see, what happens in globalization, some people lose their identity. However, what our Emirati nation wants is that to see Emiratis with a national identity with an international brain, a way of thinking. Fine we will be open to everything and everyone but we will hold onto our Emirati identity, our habits, our traditions, our religion, but, unfortunately, unfortunately, because we are a minority, some of us are withdrawn to the west, and they think of themselves as foreigners. They are taken by the tide.

Int: Is this something bothering you?

PTP/13: Definitely, Definitely.

Int: So what are the challenges you see that is facing the Emirati identity, as you said so that the Emiratis do not follow the foreigners and lose their identity?

PTP/14: First we must return the self confidence to the Emirati. Because, I am sorry to say, we have more than one sector, which are being run by foreigners. As if the Emirati brain is a desert brain. Unfortunately. Then when you work with the foreigners, you discover they do not understand anything. Believe me they do not. The Emiratis are adopting the ways of the foreigners only because they are getting the best jobs. When our country gets us so many foreigners, they are telling us they know best. So I think the first think we should do, is to return the self-confidence of the people of Emirates. Give them high level posts, let them manage. Take for instances sectors like health,

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education, tourism. It should not be managed by foreigners. We should manage them. We are the children of this country, We should manage them. We care for this country, we should manage them and the foreigners should work with us, not manage us. They should work with us for a certain period of time, then return back to their countries. Moreover, they should not be the majority in any sector of the country. Because at the end you have a mafia, and then the decrease of the Emirati role, they copy the foreigners, until the Emirati feels he has to be like them.

Int: Then?

PTP/15: For instance if you have at home, seven TV screens, in one hall, what is the message you will be giving your children? You are telling them watch too much TV. The same thing, You put me as an Emirati in an environment, and you tell me I believe in you, then you put with me 20 foreigners. What is your message?

Int: Now let's turn to another issue, the Arabic language? Where do you see it going? What does it mean to you?

PTP/16: Religion, religion and our past, because thank God, our past did not speak English, our parents, our mothers, the Arabic language was the only means of communication for them, our habits and our traditions, all was in Arabic. Everybody understood each other. But now, after English, unfortunately you sit with Arabs and you cannot understand what they want to say. Their Arabic language is weak, their English language is weak, and what happens is that they **merge (said in English)** between the two languages.

Int: Now I want to ask you, after what you just said, do you see the Arabic language now, in the place and status that you agree with?

PTP/17: It is, I mean, Look it is the language of Religion, It is the language of Koran. Then it must have, in any Islamic society the same status as the holy Koran. But, I am sorry to say, we came to a time, where we glorified the English language. For instance take the initiative of Sheikh Mohamed Bin Mubarak to promote the Arabic language that means we have ignored it. But it is also a proof that we like to return it back to its appropriate status. It is not, unfortunately, in its right place now. It is used only when we have to, when we need it only. It is not the basic language.

Int: So you do not like where it is now?

PTP/18: No. But this is logic. What do you expect when you have 80% foreigners and 20% Arabs so it becomes logic that 80% is English and only 20% is Arabic.

Int: What do you think the country should do to solve this problem, and to come with the Arabic language to a status that you want. Ptp/20: Everything starts with education.

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For example if you travel to any country, like Japan, or Malaysia, or Thailand. These people do not speak English, fine they learn it in their schools but they do not speak it. If you go to a restaurant, you as a tourist, must find the way to communicate, either by pictures, or you learn a few words, but it is impossible for them to change their language for a tourist. At the same time it is taught in their schools. We must do the same. I am not totally against communicating in English, but this is impossible to tolerate, we go to the cinema we find foreigners, we go to the hospital I find foreigners, I go to the market I find foreigners, I go to the grocery I find foreigners. So where do we speak the Arabic language. How can a student learn Arabic in school and they only use it in schools. English now is even spoken by parents because where ever he goes, he must speak English, ride with a taxi you must speak English.

Int: So what do you want to do?

Ptp/21: Return English to its proper place and return Arabic to its proper place.

Int: How?

Ptp/22: Arabic must be the first language. The mother tongue, in schools it should be the basic language, students should learn Arabic first then English. Like when I was in school, we were taught Arabic only until at grade 4 we learned English. If I go to the market I must find an Arab speaker, if I am bilingual, I must have the choice to choose the language I speak. But I should not be forced to speak the foreign language which the merchant is speaking.

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Participant eight

Interview Transcripts

Int: What does it mean to you when you say I am Emirati?

PTP/1: I feel when I say I am Emirati that I belong to this nation, I was born here, I was brought up here. This is my home. I am proud to belong to this nation. It is a nation with so deep heritage, history, culture. When I say I am Emirati, I feel strength. I feel privileged to belong here. It is a country that has given me so much. It has given me the best education; it has given me the best chances in life. I feel I owe this nation so much. I am indebted to this country. I believe not only me, but every Emirati feel this way, feels happy to be an Emirati. I feel I want to return back so much to this country because it gave me so much. Especially when I look around me, in other countries, and how they suffer. I feel privileged and blessed to be an Emirati.

Int: Tell me about how you learned English?

Ptp/2: I learned English at a very young age. I went to a language school, so I learned English when I was very young.

Int: Did you know about the western culture when you were learning English?

Ptp/3: At this age, I did not know what was culture. But I did notice that all the books, the images, the stories, were not ours. They were not Emirati or even Arabic or belong to the Arabic traditions and habits. They represented something totally new to me and very different from what I live and learn at home, from what I was brought up to believe. It was totally different.

Int: So what happened when you went to university?

Ptp/4: I was more and more merged into the western society, the western culture. At the university we had foreigners everywhere. Everyone spoke English. We had to speak English all the time because it was the only means of communication. Our English, English was the only way we could talk to one another. Even if we were only Arabs or Emiratis talking together, we would turn to English without noticing it.

Int: So how do you feel about the Arabic language? The Arabic or Emirati culture?

Ptp/5: Frankly, I feel it is vanishing. Look around you. Everything is in English. Even I talk English, I read English books and novels, I watch English movies. It is a shame.

Int: A shame?

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Ptp/6: Yes. I am an Arab, I am a Muslim, I am Emirati. Arabic is the language of the Koran. I should master it and speak it but I do not. It is a shame that I am stronger in the English language than the Arabic language, the language of my religion. The language of the Koran. Honestly I feel ashamed to say it but it is true.

Int: Where do you see the English language say in ten or 20 years from now?

Ptp/7: If we stay the way we are, English is going to dominate and it will be on the account of the Arabic language. Nobody will speak Arabic any more. That is why they made a year of Arabic language, but a year is not enough it should be every day. The government authorities should only write correspondences in Arabic. They should have more Arabs working there and not so many foreigners who only speak English.

Int: So you speak English at home?

Ptp/8: No, my parents, I speak Arabic to my parents but everyone else, my colleagues in the university, my friends, everyone else I talk English with. But definitely English is dominating. Example I talk English with my servants at home. So I feel my Arabic language is getting weaker and weaker. I had decided seriously, to stop reading English stories and novels. Why should I read English any more. My English language is fine now. My proficiency is fine, why should I keep reading English novels and not Arabic stories.

Int: Why don't you read Arabic novels?

Ptp/9: I should and I will start. Why don't I develop and enhance my mother tongue, the language of my Koran. I should and I will actually start reading Arabic novels from now. It is a shame not to do that.

Int: How do you see the Emirati culture? Is it affected from the western culture?

PTP/10: Yes, unfortunately it is. I started realizing this very much when I entered university and saw how foreigners behave. The very, I mean what was really astonishing to me, was how, even when we were learning English, in their books, how the mixing of boys and girls was so normal. How they showed us in their books and the teachers' talk that boys and girls, that mixing is an easy and normal thing. While this is very much against our habits, traditions and religion. It is not in the Emirati culture or identity that boys and girls mix, or go out together or meet. It is only in their culture, in the western culture.

Int: What do you think this country should do then to solve the problem of the Arabic language?

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PTP/11: I know that in many countries, like Malaysia people there do not speak English, they speak their own mother tongue and force the visitors to learn their language.

Int: So do you think this should be adopted here?

PTP/12: It would solve the problem, because you would have to learn and speak Arabic, but the problem will remain, because the Arabs are the minority here. This means that the people speaking Arabic are too few in comparison to the people speaking English. So the problem is not totally solved.

Int: So?

PTP/13: There must be a bigger solution. It is a huge problem and therefore needs a huge solution. I believe they should start in schools. Our education system must change. They should not introduce English at such an early stage of learning. Let them concentrate and focus on our mother tongue, Arabic. It should be first taught very well and after the students master it, then they may learn English and it should be taught as a second language only to be used upon need like when you meet foreigners. But not in everyday living, not surrounding us like it is now. You know I heard that there are people, may be decision makers, who want and are taking steps to bring back the Arabic language to the status it deserves. They want to return back the glory of the Arabic language, the glory that it once had. I have no idea what exactly they will do, or how they intend to do that. So far we heard nothing about this issue. But I do hope they do something about it because the Arabic language is going vanish.

Int: Why?

PTP/14: Because we now living in globalization. This is what globalization is all about. It will, if we do not take care and are aware of what is happening, it will take away our culture, our language and this is extremely dangerous. But we must hold onto our Emirati identity and not let anything or anyone influent it or affect it in any way. Even the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are now doing a huge campaign to revive the Arabic language and bring it back to the place and glory it once had. But I personally, when I think of this subject, the issue itself, it makes me feel so ashamed.

Int: Why?

PTP/15: Because these foreigners have now shown to the world that our language, the language of our Koran, that Arabic is lost and now we have to bring it back. They want to show the world that we are like this now. But at least our country now has noticed this issue and is moving towards solving it. They have realized that it is an issue; it is a problem that needs fixing. They are moving at least. This is what counts.

Int: And this is good?

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PTP/16: Definitely, look, see how the foreigners act. They should speak Arabic but in contrast it is us who are learning their English, it is us who are learning their language. Although it is them who came to an Arab country, not the other way round. They should learn Arabic not we have to learn their language, not we have to learn English. This is the least they should do. But they do not they expect us, Arabs, Emiratis to learn English, to learn their language. How can that be? Because we allowed them to do that to us.

Int: Finally, going to another point, do you think learning English has changed you? In what way?

PTP/17: there is the good and the bad. Learning English has exposed me to other cultures which I did not exist before. It is the language of business and the computer and it is a means of communicating with the foreigners. But I do not like it when English becomes dominating my life. It is everywhere and that is bad. But I did not get affected by it or its western culture because I was brought up in an Emirati home with its traditions, habits, the right and the wrong as dictated by Islam. But other people, who did not have strong Emirati bringing up, they may get influenced and affected by the foreigners. My parents did not have this challenge.

Int: Why do you think that is so?

PTP/18: Because at the time of my parents, when they were growing up, we did not have so many foreigners around, they did not need to learn English, Arabs where everywhere. So I truly believe it was better. My parent's time was much better. It was more authentic. They were Emiratis with no other influence on their culture, no encroachment on their language, their identity. But now things have changed very much and we all do not like it.

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APPENDIX 5b

Interview transcripts

Using Photographs as Prompts with

Four Participants

Interview Code Sheet

Participant No.	Participant pseudo Name	Details
1	Fawas	35 minute interview held in the Sorbonne University on 8 August 2011
2	Lessa	20 minute interview held at the Al Wehda Mall on 18 June 2011
3	Bashayes	28 minute interview held at the Dom café on 7 July 2011
4	Salma	30 minute interview held at El Wahda mall on 9 June 2011

Interviewer	Int.
Using Photographs as Prompts Interviewer Question	Int/p.
Using Photographs as Prompts Participant 1	Ptp/p
Using Photographs as Prompts Participant Answer to question 1	Ptp/p1

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Participant one

Interview transcript using Photographs as Prompts

Int: What do you think of this picture?

Ptp/p1: Its nice but, oh, I, why do they write Abu Dhabi this way?

Int : Which way?

Ptp/p2: They are writing it in their language. I mean the way they write it in French

Int: So

Ptp/p3: why?

Int: and why not?

Ptp/p4: they are here, in our country, they are not in France, and they must write it the way we do.

Int: I see. How about these two

Ptp/p5: It's OK. They want to tell us that the French university is a bridge between civilizations. But here they wrote our city capital the way we write it. I do not see how they think they are a bridge between... I do not know but... they are westerners and we are Arabs.

Int: what do you mean?

Ptp/p6: I mean I just do not see the relation between us and them or the bridge

Int: And this one

Ptp/p7: So they want to tell us they are 75 years old and why do they have their language first. They are here in our country; they should use Arabic on top of the French. This is not nice not polite.

Int: Why

Ptp/p8: it means they do not respect us, our language, I don't know it's just not nice

Int: how about this picture?

Ptp/p9: see this is good because we have the Arabic on top of the English. This is how it should be

Int: Why does it make a difference to you?

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Ptp/10: because this is our nation, Arabic is our language and when these foreigners come here they should respect our language and put it first. It makes me angry to see such things. When they come here and still put their language first.

Int: Have you ever seen this picture before. I found it on the university web site. What do you think of it?

Ptp/p11: It is disgusting, just shameful

Int: Why?

Ptp/p12: What do you mean why? Look at them, they are wearing our national dress and playing foreign music. They should be ashamed of themselves not take pictures and advertise it. If they are wearing the national dress they must respect it.

Int: why do you say they are not respecting it?

Ptp/p13: because this is not our culture, not our traditions, these are foreign traditions; these things are an outsider habits not ours. Our Emirati females should not do this

Int: So would it be fine if males do it

Ptp/p14: Not when they are wearing our national costume. Our Emirati dress must be respected at all times

Int: Now how about this picture, what do you think of it?

Ptp/p15: It's everywhere. Our government is making it very easy for both Arabic and non Arabic speakers to know where the parking lots are. I like it

Int: What do you like about it?

Ptp/p16: First I like the colors and the sign is very clear and big.

Int: What do you see in this picture?

Ptp/p17: I like it, our government is trying to teach the foreigners our language, the Arabic language, so they write MAWAQIF using English letters but it's an Arabic word. Let them learn our language as long as they are staying in our country. Why not?

Int: Why is it important for you that the foreigners learn your language?

Ptp/p18: Why do we learn theirs? And by time we may speak less English and more Arabic if they learn it.

Int: What do you see in this picture?

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Ptp/p19: All our streets signs are written in both Arabic and English because we have so many foreigners in our country. We have to do that. But I know many Arabic countries do not write street signs in English. May be it's because they do not have so many foreigners like us.

Int: How about this last picture. It's a promo for a film.

Ptp/p20: You mean an Arabic film, so why do they, I mean I do not see why, if it is an Arabic film, they write the title using English letters? Why? Since only Arabs or Arabic speaking audience will watch the film, why do they need to write its title in Arabic? I just do not know. Such little things make me annoyed. Look around you we are being surrounded by English everywhere, in the streets, in films, in coffee shops. I even know many restaurants that only have Menus in English. So what if I do not know English, and I only know Arabic, does this mean I do not eat in this restaurant? This is ridiculous.

Int: What do you see in this direction plaque which is hanged in the university?

Ptp/p21: This is not good. The university should concentrate on our Arabic language. They should give it importance not neglect it totally like in this direction sign. Because when we do not see Arabic everywhere we tend to forget it. But I think it is still a good idea to write Majlis in English which is an Arabic word. The university wants to teach non-Arabic speakers Arabic word which is good.

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Participant two

Interview transcript using Photographs as Prompts

Int: Do you recognize this picture?

Ptp/p1: Yes it our French university here

Int: what do you think of it?

Ptp/p2: It's OK but why do they have the dome on it?

Int: what do you mean?

Ptp/p3: The dome is for a mosque not for a foreign university. I do not understand why they have a dome to represent a French university. They are foreigners. They are Christians so why have a mosque dome.

Int: but can't a dome be for anything else beside a mosque?

Ptp/p4: No we always saw only mosques with domes nothing else. No I do not think this is right

Int: How about this picture.

Ptp/p5: It not right to say that their university is a bridge between civilizations. Civilization is a very big word and who are they to be able to have a bridge between civilizations. What do they know about us and our civilization?

Int: Do you see anything else in this picture?

Ptp/p6: No it's just that I think they put this catchy line to attract getting students to their university

Int: and what do you see in this picture?

Ptp/p7: The University wants to tell us that they are old and are 75 years in the education field. I noticed in the first picture they wrote Abu Dhabi in French but now in this picture they wrote it the way we write it. Why is that?

Int: Why do you think so?

Ptp/p8: I do not know, may be someone told them to correct it.

Int: How about this one?

Ptp/p9: That is a good picture because the sign has our language on top of the English. But why do they use a dome when they built the university.

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Int: and why not?

Ptp/p10: This is a French university, not a Muslim Educational institution or a mosque. Domes are usually an icon indicating an Islamic building. It's not nice. Why do they do that?

Int: How does it make you feel?

Ptp/11: Bad.

Int: How about this picture?

Ptp/p12: What is this? Is it Photoshop?

Int: No. I found this picture on the university web site

Ptp/p13: This is a very bad picture. It is a shame. They should never wear our national dress when they do that.

Int: Do what?

Ptp/p14: do like the westerners. We Emirati females usually do not do that. It is not in our culture. It is not part of our society. And if they want to do that, it should be in their homes where no one can see them. Not take a picture and put it on the web site.

Int: why do you feel that way?

Ptp/p15: We are Zayed's children. We have our status. We are Emirati females with our national dress and our culture and our heritage. I feel that all this is not respected by this picture

Int: And how about this picture?

Ptp/p16: It's our parking signs in the streets. I like the blue and white. For me white is peace and blue in the sky. I like the combination of the colors. And I like the word written in both Arabic and English. I mean using the Arabic word and writing parking in English.

Int: Why?

Ptp/p16: first because Arabic is our language, it is the language of our religion and second so the foreigners here, I mean those who do not speak Arabic, know where to park.

Int: And this photo?

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Ptp/p17: It is the payment machines in all the streets. I like they have the Arabic word Mawaqif written in Arabic and the same word, not translated, but written in English letters.

Int: What is it you like about this picture?

Ptp/p18: I like it because it's about time the foreigners living here should learn our language. Why are we all learning English and they do not learn Arabic? So by time, a word here and a word there, they will pick up some Arabic.

Int: and this one?

Ptp/p19: All our street signs are written like this. I mean in both languages. It's OK. But I wish one day to see all the signs in the streets, the names of restaurants, the menus in coffee shops and all only use Arabic language.

Int: Why?

Ptp/p20: because it is our language, why do we use their language when they live in my country and not use my language?

Int: and finally, what do you see in this photo?

Ptp/p21: It's a promo about a film. It is an Egyptian film. I saw the film it is very funny. Why ... if it is an Arabic film why do they have the title in both Arabic and English? Anyone who will go to the film will understand Arabic, so why put the English on it

Int: What does that mean to you?

Ptp/p22: again even if it is an Arabic film, they still put English and I do not know why but it does not make sense to me at all.

Int: How about this picture, the direction signs in the university?

Ptp/p23: Now the university has really spoiled everything. They are not giving due respect to our language. Even when they write an Arabic word like 'Majlis' they write it in English

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Participant three

Interview transcript using Photographs as Prompts

Int: I will show you a group of pictures and I want you please to tell me what you think of each one.

Ptp/p1: Yes I know this is the Sorbonne university icon

Int: what do you see in the photo?

Ptp/p2: The dome of the university and the yellow and blue colors they use in all their publications and pictures

Int: How about this one.

Ptp/p3: I saw these plaques on the outer walls of the university. It is nice because they have them in both Arabic and French. This is how it should be, I mean, you see they are a French university working here in our country so they should put both Arabic and French

Int: And this one

Ptp/p4: It's a nice one, they are quite an old university, that, it is good to have an old university not something that is one or two years old.

Int: why?

Ptp/p5: because education is very important to us to build our nation. Those universities that open here, some of them are not really good ones. They are here just to take our money with bad education. But this ... The Sorbonne is a very good university world known.

Int: what do you see in this picture?

Ptp/p6: It is the entrance to the university. I think the sign is good and fair

Int: Why do you say it is fair?

Ptp/p7: it has the Arabic writing first then the English. But I think it should have been French and not English. It is a French university. But, you know, I mean English is everywhere now

Int: How does that make you feel?

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Ptp/p8: It is like, even when the French education comes to our country, English still puts it aside. Anyway they teach their masters in English

Int: And this one

Ptp/p9: I always wondered since the Sorbonne opened here, why they have a dome as their icon. Domes are for mosques, No, I mean we always see mosques from inside as domes. Anyway it is a nice photo with the colors and all

Int: What do you think of this picture?

Ptp/p10: What is this? Where did you get it from?

Int: From the university web site

Ptp/p11: I remember this picture. Some time ago it was going around on Twitter and it received so many nasty comments. People were very angry and contested the picture and what it represents.

Int: What does it represent to you?

Ptp/p12: A very shameful picture. It degrades our national costume; it does not do fairness to our roots and our traditions, our culture our everything.

Int: What do you mean?

Ptp/p13: Emirati females with their national dress should be respected, that, our attire is very dear to us and should never be represented in that form.

Int: Which form?

Ptp/p14: This is a band, obviously from the musical instruments they are using; you can tell they are playing western music because our Arabic music cannot be played on these instruments. And the girls playing in bands... this is not us. Not Arabs or Emiratis. This is fine in the western world but not here, not for us. It is a very shameful and this picture makes me very angry.

Int: How about this one?

Ptp/p15: It is a parking sign in the streets. I think it's nice that they chose blue and white to write the parking signs. I also think it was wise to write it both in Arabic and English because as you know we have more non-Arabic speaking than Arabic speaking people in this country.

Int: And how does that make you feel.

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Ptp/p16: Sometimes I feel I am not in my own country, but people tell me we are a young nation and our population is very small so we need foreigners to help us build our country. May be after some time we can rely on ourselves and all the foreigners will leave. Then all the signs will be in Arabic only.

Int: How about this picture?

Ptp/p17: It is the payment machines for the parking. You know only a few years ago we never had them. Abu Dhabi was a quite city with not many people. Parking was easy and no traffic jams. You could easily find a space for your car anywhere at any time. But now because our population is increasing and more foreigners are coming in, parking became difficult. That is why they started last year this thing of parking meters and you have to pay to park in the streets. This concept is new here but I see it all the time when I travel to the west, I mean like US and UK.

Int: But does it make parking easier.

Ptp/p18: Yes but it is only another indicator, it tells you that our city has much more people. It became more jammed. So, I think it OK. Yes it does make parking easier

Int: This one

Ptp/p19: It is a street sign, a very detailed one showing you the street name and the zone and everything. Our government is very detailed and always puts all the street signs in both Arabic and English as I told you before because of the many foreigners here as you probably have noticed.

In: And is this good or bad?

Ptp/p20: I suppose for the time being we do need them but I hope not for very long. You see when we have so many non-Arabic speaking people here, they force us to put such signs, they may, I mean for people who are not really sure of themselves, these foreigners may influence them in a bad way. The way they dress or talk or even the language they choose to speak. We are Emiratis and we should remain so holding to our culture, our traditions, and our heritage and never to let go.

Int: This is the last picture I have, what do you see in it?

Ptp/p21: See just as I was telling you, now this is a promo for an Egyptian film. It is an Arabic comedy film, which means anyone entering it must speak and understand Arabic. Now do they have to put the title in English letters but using the Arabic word? They do not need to do that. I suppose it became a habit to write English or using English letters in anything written here.

Int: What do you see in this sign direction photograph?

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Ptp/22: You see, that is what I meant. That is why my niece has very bad, really pathetic Arabic.

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Participant four

Interview transcript using Photographs as Prompts

Int: I will show you some pictures and please tell me what you see in them.

Ptp/p1: It is the university of Sorbonne logo and they, I noticed before they write Abu Dhabi in a French way.

Int: So

Ptp/p2: Why do they do that? They can write French in their own country but since they are here they should write it the way we write it. It is like they are forcing us to use their way even in our country, anyway what is the next photo

Int: And this one

Ptp/p3: These are metal plaques on the walls. I like the word bridging between civilizations and I like it because they have both Arabic and French, you see, at the end they are a French university,

Int: Why do you like the phrase 'bridge between civilizations'?

Ptp/p4: It means that the French people are putting our civilization and their on equal levels and they have a bridge. I think, look you cannot have a bridge between two unequal sides. So it's nice to say that.

Int: What do you see in this photo?

Ptp/p5: Again it's their logo but this time they want to tell us they have been in the field of education for 75 years which is good. Some foreign universities are not as strong as the Sorbonne and unfortunately they open here.

Int: Why do you think so?

Ptp/p6: Because they know how crucial education is for our people. Our leaders have instructed us that we all must learn, that we nationals by time and education will be solely responsible to build this nation. It is good to have such a strong university in our country.

Int: What do you see in this picture?

Ptp/p7: This is the big plaque we have outside the main entrance to the university. It is very clear and helps all to find their way. Very clear directions. And the colors are nice too. They always use white and colors all over the university which is good to the eye

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Int: What else do you see in the picture?

Ptp/p8: I see Arabic on top of the English which is nice and this is how it should be. We are an Arab nation so our language must prevail. But I think they should have used French and not English. You see in the previous pictures they had French and now they have English, I think it is better to stick to one other language beside Arabic and not keep mixing up.

Int: How about this picture?

Ptp/p9: Are you joking? Is this a real picture? What is this?

Int: This is a photo I got from the University web site. What do you see in it?

Ptp/p10: I see nothing but disgrace, I see shame. Our national costume must be respected and given high consideration. If this is a true picture these girls must be ashamed of themselves.

Int: Why?

Ptp/p11: Why? You ask me why? They have disgraced our national dress, our dress is part of our identity our heritage our roots. These girls must be punished and this picture must be taken off immediately.

Int: Why do you feel like that?

Ptp/p12: We take pride in who we are, we are Emiratis, We are Zayed's children and we will remain like this until we die. This is a western attitude, to have girls playing in a band. This is not us and you can tell they are playing western music because our Arabic musical instruments do not look like this. This is a very strange behavior to our society.

Int: How about this picture?

Ptp/p13: Ok, fine these parking sign are everywhere in the city. They direct you to find parking lots and they are written in both Arabic and English so that the non-Arabic reader can park his car. The government realizes that we have many of them; I mean those who cannot read Arabic so they write in English too. The signs are very well made, clear colors, big writing, indicating where to park your car.

Int: And this one

Ptp/p14: these are the parking payment machines. I like it when they have the Arabic word written using English letters. This means that the non-Arabic speaker now understands the word parking in Arabic. My foreign friends all now say the word Mawaqif and understand its meaning. This is good.

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Int: Why?

Ptp/p15: I feel happy when I find a foreigner speaking Arabic, it's like they appreciate our language our culture and who we are. Why not, and we learn their language why not they learn our Arabic language, they are living here.

Int: Look at this picture

Ptp/p16: These street signs are in all streets and junctions. Our government is very helpful to make everyone know where they are and how to get from one point to the other. Again they have the street details in both Arabic and English so that foreigners do not get lost.

Int: What else do you see in the picture?

Ptp/p17: I like the blue and white colors and the way the boxes are written, it is very clear. You can even read it while driving your car. And they are also very big to be seen from far even if you are not standing in a traffic light, still big enough to be read.

Int: How about this one? This is the last picture

Ptp/p18: This is a ticket or no it's an advertisement for the new Egyptian film. See even in the Arabic films they put the title in both Arabic and English, Why? Anyone going to see this film is only an Arabic speaker so they do not need to put the English. I do not like this or even start to understand why they do that. Can you tell me in any other country were they do this? It just does not seem right.

Int: Why

Ptp/p19: you ask me why. I travel around the world, I never saw this in any other country, it is only here they do that. I was lately in France they only use French. Any other country also has expatriates but each one uses his language not like us.

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APPENDIX 6

NVivo Code Sheets

Name: Challenges faced by Emirati\English as Universal language

<Internals\\Respondent1> - § 1 reference coded [1.38% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.38% Coverage

we do admit this, we say this language [English] if you go to any country in the world, if you do not speak their language, then you speak English. That is ok, no problem. But as long as I am living in my country, we us Arabs, why should we resort to English, what is the reason, so that makes one annoyed from this and sad

<Internals\\Respondent2> - § 1 reference coded [1.19% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.19% Coverage

Ptp: second may be because I am very socially active (last two words said in English) on the Internet and I have my own blogs and face book, the English language, to the extent that some sites after they transformed them into Arabic sites, they sometimes change some icons to Arabic and we got used to them in English, so we ask what does that mean

Unfiled Notes Page 2

Future of Arabic

Friday, May 11, 2012

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Name: Impact of English in UAE\Future of Arabic

<Internals\\Respondent1> - § 3 references coded [2.26% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.39% Coverage

if we are talking 10 or 15 years from now of course the English language is in the increase and the Arabic is only used in its colloquial way – between you and me – the person who is of the same nationality like me or between me and an Arab – we go back to the idea of one sentence made of 3 English words and 3 Arabic words

Reference 2 - 0.73% Coverage

of course the English language will be more widespread while the Arabic language – I want say totally disappears – but will keep in the decrease and decrease in its usage

Reference 3 - 0.15% Coverage

definitely the home with the school

<Internals\\Respondent2> - § 3 references coded [6.38% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.85% Coverage

I feel angry angry but some people as they say do you know the term (word said in English) 'snobbish' it means she is proud but no no this is not a sign of development on the contrary the West should learn Arabic but the Arabic language is too hard for them but here even those who do not speak well English at least try by saying water come eat go (4 words said in English) they try it is important for such people that they show to others they are civilized ... I speak English even with my young child who did not even start KG I talk English

Reference 2 - 1.18% Coverage

Int: OK so you are angry so you I mean I want to know what is your feeling when you say the Arabic language and the English language are you satisfied with the status of the Arabic language or the status of the English language in Emirates, I mean being an Emirati and all

Ptp: No No unfortunately, the Arabic language is not given its rights

Reference 3 - 3.34% Coverage

Ptp: I feel, not my children but my grandchildren, God willing, I feel we will reach a stage where they will not know how to talk Arabic. No seriously, I mean it even with the presence of school. I know people who are school graduates, schools of the United Arab Emirates, who do not know how to talk Arabic, their Arabic language, or if they speak it, it is very wrong, even schools now are concentrating too much on the English language. I can tell you, I see this in my sister. My sister is younger than me, she is considering the coming generation. Her school report indicates that the marks in English are in the

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nineties and in the Arabic are in the sixties. I told her is our mother American or British? Why? Why? What is happening? Masha allah, now she is 14 years of age just imagine her children, which are the new generations and the next and the next. One feels that Arabic will be totally deleted from them. This is how I feel, even the religion is in a decline

<Internals\\Respondent3> - § 2 references coded [6.80% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.86% Coverage

T10 The Arabic language will always be there, will remain forever, It is impossible for the Arabic language to vanish because the biggest elements of any civilization is the language and religion. Our mother tongue is the Arabic language, and our Islamic religion is in Arabic so our civilization and our language can never vanish. This is the first reason; the second reason is that as long as we have generations being brought up on our heritage, we will always have the Arabic language.

Reference 2 - 2.93% Coverage

T18 Frankly yes, Second, many people, and I am one of them, frankly I do not much understand in it, but some people try to translate every word in it to Arabic, by the way I personally like old sayings. Like now we have everything in English, the computers, the TV, when we want to know the news we turn to BBC or CNN why don't we turn to Al Jezira or Al Arabia channels

<Internals\\Respondent7> - § 1 reference coded [4.48% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.48% Coverage

T16 Religion, religion and our past, because thank God, our past did not speak English, our parents, our mothers, the Arabic language was the only means of communication for them, our habits and our traditions, all was in Arabic. Everybody understood each other. But now, after English, unfortunately you sit with Arabs and you cannot understand what they want to say. Their Arabic language is weak, their English language is weak, and what happens is that they **merge (said in English)** between the two languages.

<Internals\\Respondent8> - § 2 references coded [3.58% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.92% Coverage

T5 Frankly, I feel it is vanishing. Look around you. Everything is in English. Even I talk English, I read English books and novels, I watch English movies. It is a shame.

Reference 2 - 1.65% Coverage

APPENDICES

T7 If we stay the way we are, English is going to dominate and it will be on the account of the Arabic language. Nobody will speak Arabic any more.

Linked Memo

Memos\Future of Arabic

APPENDICES

Name: Challenges faced by Emirati\Arabic language and its culture

<Internals\\Respondent1> - § 1 reference coded [0.86% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.86% Coverage

Int: tell me do you see that in order to maintain the Arabic language has any connection with maintaining the Emirati culture or the Emirati identity. Do you see any link between them?

Ptp: Definitely

<Internals\\Respondent2> - § 1 reference coded [1.89% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.89% Coverage

Ptp: do you want the truth? No. because we all see the western culture as, I mean for me it means fashion, so when we speak even of outer appearance of the western culture, I mean the way they dress. I see it more practical or even the way they speak, cool (word said in English). Do you understand me? I mean for example when I wear my traditional Emirati costume then I go to class (word said in English) it is not practical, not like if I am wearing a T-shirt and jeans, see what I mean, I am just giving you an example of the outer appearance only

<Internals\\Respondent4> - § 1 reference coded [5.89% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 5.89% Coverage

T7 Negative. Because it does not only stop at the language, it is also influencing our thoughts, our clothes, our culture, and many things. Look at the clothes, it is true that our Emirati girls are wearing the national clothes, but they have their national clothes open and you can see from under they are wearing, OK we know that your identity is your Abaya, your head cover you should have a certain look. But now they are wearing the Abaya just like that but underneath our national back Abaya they are wearing colors, wearing stretch pants, their hair is spiky and colours and colours and when I see them I say to myself she is not Emirati, she is not a Muslim. Real Emiratis do not do this.

Linked Memo

Memos\\Arabic language and culture

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d Notes Page 1

Unfiled Notes Page 2

Arabic Language year age and culture

Friday, May 11, 2012

10:40 PM

Name: Impact of English in UAE\Arabic Language year

<Internals\\Respondent1> - § 3 references coded [3.39% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.42% Coverage

yes, of course this only indicates how much we appreciate and need to protect our Arabic lan guage

Reference 2 - 0.24% Coverage

The Arabic language should, must be given in our schools

Reference 3 - 2.74% Coverage

when I teach you Arabic but people look at it from a different way, I am an Arab why should I learn Arabic. In schools we learn for 12 years and we are taught Arabic but we must teach people why we are teaching them the Arabic language whey Arabic grammar is very important it is not important to go deep into the language but you must not the worth and importance of the Arabic language because it is the language that represents your identity, you as an individual, it is the language of your country, and you must know it and know what it is worth, and how much that by only changing one diacritic mark the entire meaning of the word changes

<Internals\\Respondent2> - § 1 reference coded [0.91% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.91% Coverage

Ptp:I do not know about this. Honestly I do not know, but what I do know there was an initiative about the Arabic language, which was the initiative of Sheikh Mohamed Bin Rashed when he said all government must write all their correspondences in Arabic all in Arabic

<Internals\\Respondent5> - § 2 references coded [4.80% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.45% Coverage

T27 I like this very much. I like to see the Arabic language getting bigger

Reference 2 - 4.35% Coverage

T31Yes but it is not enough, it has to be in schools, and you must start with the youngsters around ten or twelve years of age. I remember when I was twelve I took zero in Arabic spelling. I remember I had an Egyptian teacher, who was teaching us how to write Arabic calligraphy, then he gave us a spelling test and I got a zero and he started shouting at me. I remember this age. It is a good age to start teaching our children the Arabic language, in schools, from arcade games, from anything. The country should not allow importation of any game, or car, unless it is in

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Arabic. Look at China, they control everything. We should do the same. It should start from the decision makers, from the laws, Arabic should exist in everything.

<Internals\\Respondent8> - § 1 reference coded [4.62% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.62% Coverage

T7 If we stay the way we are, English is going to dominate and it will be on the account of the Arabic language. Nobody will speak Arabic any more. That is why they made a year of Arabic language, but a year is not enough it should be every day. The government authorities should only write correspondences in Arabic. They should have more Arabs working there and not so many foreigners who only speak English.

Linked Memo

Memos\\Arabic Language Year

APPENDICES

Name: Culture\Language and culture

<Internals\Respondent1> - § 12 references coded [9.33% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.17% Coverage

First I want to identify what culture is

Reference 2 - 0.38% Coverage

How do you identify culture? What is culture in your mind so that my answer is specific?

Reference 3 - 0.31% Coverage

Ok, well there was a time in my life when I went to the United Kingdom

Reference 4 - 0.31% Coverage

I lived with a family, as they call it a 'live-in summer school' program

Reference 5 - 1.95% Coverage

I see, I am now thinking... I can learn English without knowing anything about the western culture. Because when you learn a language, like for instance, the English language, you learn it, irrespective what is happening in the west. What is happening in a foreign country or in English speaking countries. I can learn it and take from it whatever I want, no more no less, so I do not feel there is a connection, there is no connection that I personally see

Reference 6 - 0.25% Coverage

maybe there is a connection, but this is my personal opinion

Reference 7 - 0.79% Coverage

as I told you before, the word identity is a big word, we say personal identity which means belonging, and it means habits and traditions, there is a possibility that it might change

Reference 8 - 1.01% Coverage

yes there is a possibility that the thinking might change

Int: and so you see if this thinking is changed, is this to the better or to the worse

Ptp: it depends on the person; I mean there are people who learned English and became worse

Reference 9 - 1.06% Coverage

APPENDICES

yes. If I am in an Arab country why don't I make all my correspondences and communication in Arabic. But when I enter a shop I find them all from different nationalities speaking English. So if an Arab enters the shop they cannot communicate with him

Reference 10 - 1.45% Coverage

I mean now look the official language of the country is Arabic but the day I do not know English the English language how can I then bring English ideas or English equipment and when I do bring them in, these things will lighten or decreases the existence of our traditional identity it will decrease from it being available in the country

Reference 11 - 1.48% Coverage

first we must make people understand that the day they study English, their ideas and thoughts may change. The day I go to places I must learn English to I can get around doing my daily chores. But when I am talking Arabic I am saying I am an Arab so we must teach people the importance of the Arabic language the language before we teach it to them

Reference 12 - 0.18% Coverage

language is directly connected to identity

<Internals\\Respondent2> - § 3 references coded [5.02% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.74% Coverage

no I see them separately I mean I could say we connect to English as a language that we must learn because at the end of the year there is an exam or a project (word said in English) that we must do in English as for the western culture it is around us everywhere there is no escape even our clothes is like the westerners all our shops here write in English not in Arabic I can say that the western culture is much more in our daily lives it surrounds us everywhere and that is not because I learned English

Reference 2 - 1.89% Coverage

Ptp: do you want the truth? No. because we all see the western culture as, I mean for me it means fashion, so when we speak even of outer appearance of the western culture, I mean the way they dress. I see it more practical or even the way they speak, cool (word said in English). Do you understand me? I mean for example when I wear my traditional Emirati costume then I go to class (word said in English) it is not practical, not like if I am wearing a T-shirt and jeans, see what I mean, I am just giving you an example of the outer appearance only

Reference 3 - 1.39% Coverage

Ptp: very much, too difficult. Because wherever I go, the western culture, finish, it has dominated us, I honestly feel, that bit by bit, that the Emirati identity, I mean or the Emirati nature or characteristics

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around us, is vanishing. I would not be lying to you if I say, and I will not name which Emirate, but one day I was browsing the net and I saw some pictures and images, or regions and buildings

<Internals\\Respondent3> - § 2 references coded [29.09% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 27.79% Coverage

T6 Yes there is a very big relation between learning English and the Western culture. I will give you an example. I graduated from a Government school in Al Ain. That means we took very little English, everything was taught in Arabic and we took English only as a language which was not much. What made me like the English language was, when I was young I used to love watching TV. I saw series, and funny shows in English. I used to see MBC and they used to show many funny sitcoms, they were 30 minutes, it was a foreign channel. **This is part of my history, there was a series called the Fresh Principal, it was about an American teenager, he was trying to know his way , he was very cool, being brought up in his very uptight family. I liked the idea, he is cool, he speaks in a better accent that was in the nineties (said in English).** This series affected me so much that I said I must continue my studies in America. **I didn't even know were America was on the map, but I said I wanted to continue my studies in America (said in English).** I liked their culture, I liked when they go to schools they have their locker rooms, **We have.** I was impressed by the way they teach in their schools, their dynamics, everything was so different. Everything was so different than our schools. In our schools, we have the morning lines, then go up to classes, lesson one, two, three, it was a very traditional way of teaching. **Not original at all.** For me it was the other way round, not that the language introduced me to their culture, **but because of their culture I liked their language, So for me it was the opposite. Everyone asks me this question: Where did you study your English, how do you know so good this language, and I answer, frankly, it is from TV, from their culture. Not TV as a screen, but from their culture, I was introduced to another culture, I got to know that we do not have one culture, but several cultures, and because of that I liked English. But there is a very big fall or pitch here, some people for example will think for example X likes a culture, means he will be following that culture. That does not really happen.**

May be because our culture is planted, very well planted in us, so no matter how we like a culture it cannot take our culture away. For example I can be wearing a T-shirt and a pair of jeans, it does not make me less Emirati, it does not make me less Emirati. Lets us say when I travel on a business trip and I am wearing a suit, maybe it is a very small idea, but sometimes we like to put a pin of the UAE flag. It is not an obligation; it is not stamped in our passport that we need to put a flag on our suit. But these little things really create this big culture. Think of it this way, what makes a big dessert, it is the small particles. And these small things make our culture. For example, now in our office when we have a celebration and we go and get Arabic coffee to everyone, even the way we pour it, not like everyone, it must be followed by the Emirati way, it is our tradition. I would love someone to ask me about this just to teach him about our culture. May be because when I was 4 or 5 years old, there was the hip hop music coming up, I would love for example to have a German lady listen to our Mohamed Abdo (a famous Emirati singer), or anything from our culture. Just to say we like our culture, we love our

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culture, but please, do consider other things. But we do have some common things. We may be thousands of miles away, but we do share a lot of things.

Reference 2 - 1.30% Coverage

Q8 You have strongly linked language with culture, did I understand you correctly, you do see a strong link between culture and language, right?

T8 YES, definitely

<Internals\\Respondent4> - § 2 references coded [3.68% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.62% Coverage

Q4 Do you see a connection between the identity and the language?

T4 Yes

Reference 2 - 3.06% Coverage

T18 Yes, they are directly related. I told you, the culture influenced the identity and the language. For example, as I told you the western culture influenced our Emirati identity and our Arabic language. Emirati culture which is clothes, habits and traditions, and almost everything, has been affected by the western culture. They are very closely connected.

<Internals\\Respondent5> - § 3 references coded [3.36% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.42% Coverage

T4 It takes it out of its path. It takes the Emirati identity out of its path. But I think to a positive direction and not to a bad one. There are **advantages** (said in English) that we take from it and we develop. It can be both bad and good

Reference 2 - 1.30% Coverage

T15 It distorts it, yes it distorts many times. Like sometimes here they like the western culture but do not say it, they do not want to say it. For instance, I do not know, they fear it will influence them, I do not know

Reference 3 - 0.64% Coverage

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T17 They fear if they admit it, people will tell them why did you change, why did you leave your own culture

<Internals\\Respondent6> - § 4 references coded [20.17% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 7.33% Coverage

T4Yes I felt the different. When I was in school, I did not see or feel much that the western culture is too much or too strong, why because all our teachers where Arabs, and not like now. Look now, anywhere you go, in restaurants, in shops, TV, we are surrounded by the western culture. For example when you look at an elderly lady, when she goes to the market, she has to speak English, or a restaurant, you would get shocked when she says, **can I have one chicken sandwich (said in English)**. This she has to do by force. We are in a country that has so many cultures, and we have we have so many different nationalities. So the only means of communication is English. The fact that we are a minority, I feel this affects on our culture, but before there was not that much effect.

Reference 2 - 9.16% Coverage

T9 No in the past we did not have foreign teachers, and now they are there but they are not welcomed, nobody wanted them. We are afraid. The new generations may pick up from their traditions and habits, they may see the western traditions as normal and they are wrong, they are originally wrong, but they will see it normal, because now we have globalization. In the past, when we used to see a foreigner, we wanted to talk with him and train ourselves in English, but now everything is changed, but now, I think it is the minority who have changed, like when I see the men, like the Emirati men who wear jeans, T-shirt and a cap, when they walk, most of the people look at them and say what is this, because he represents the minority. If it was normal, people would not look at them. But in Dubai it is very different, because in Dubai they have more and more foreigners and they have a wider collection of cultures so you notice the Emiratis are more influenced and affected.

Reference 3 - 2.35% Coverage

T10 Yes there is a connection between them, but not a very strong one. The Arabic language does not affect much on the identity. And if you were a person who understands these things, language will not be affected. But it also depends on other factors.

Reference 4 - 1.33% Coverage

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T11 For example, all the satellite channels now, the internet, the foreign people, these I consider more influential than the language itself

<Internals\\Respondent8> - § 1 reference coded [4.54% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.54% Coverage

I was more and more merged into the western society, the western culture. At the university we had foreigners everywhere. Everyone spoke English. We had to speak English all the time because it was the only means of communication. Our English, English was the only way we could talk to one another. Even if we were only Arabs or Emiratis talking together, we would turn to English without noticing it.

Linked Memo

Memos\\Language and Culture

APPENDICES

Name: Nodes\\Arabic Under Threat

<Internals\\Respondent1> - § 12 references coded [11.42% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.64% Coverage

what does it mean, for example when I am sitting with some Arab friends and they talk to you in English and none of us bearing an English nationality?

Reference 2 - 0.31% Coverage

Or they speak a sentence made up of 3 Arabic words and 3 English words

Reference 3 - 1.63% Coverage

I have a maid – this maid is speaking English to my children, the mother is speaking English to the children. The children go to a school and the parents say they will get the best education – some schools teach Arabi only twice a week or once a week. There is no focus – at this least this is how it was when I was in school may be the system (word said in English) is changed now.

Reference 4 - 0.85% Coverage

so what do I mean starting to disappear, I also mean we only use it in specific circumstances and even the language I am talking with you now is not the real Arabic, it is called the colloquial Arabic.

Reference 5 - 1.39% Coverage

I am not using the real Arabic words, filled with everyday common words or popular words and if an Arab person seats with me now, maybe he cannot understand me – it is not the classical Arabic that all Arabs understand. I am talking Emirati Arabic that only Emiratis understand or the people from the Gulf states in general

Reference 6 - 1.37% Coverage

if we are talking 10 or 15 years from now of course the English language is in the increase and the Arabic is only used in its colloquial way – between you and me – the person who is of the same nationality like me or between me and an Arab – we go back to the idea of one sentence made of 3 English words and 3 Arabic words

Reference 7 - 0.72% Coverage

of course the English language will be more widespread while the Arabic language – I want say totally disappears – but will keep in the decrease and decrease in its usage

Reference 8 - 0.84% Coverage

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Emirati man or an Emirati woman saw my sister in the situation they would say what is this backward she is so much behind, we have reached this era and she does not speak English. This is reality and I see it and face it all around me in everyday situations because I have sisters who are much older than me and they have started learning English very late in their lives may be in grades four or six primary even I have some of the them started learning English in preparatory school. I mean very late in their lives. And I have some sisters who never entered university and so their English level is very basic which means very simple so the day we go out they do not speak English. Even all the people around us, whether they are Arabs or even foreigners they are astonished why doesn't she speak English. This means that that my sister's situation is a sign of her being backward although I find it the contrary and find this that she is holding on to her Arabic language. I see as they force us to speak their English language why don't we force them to learn our Arabic language. I mean I am very strong about this issue I am very angry about this issue

Reference 2 - 3.62% Coverage

people of this country, we as Emiratis do not give it its rights I get angry for example I am now in the maser program or not let us leave the master when I was still an undergraduate in the university when I talk with any Emirati girl in class, you can notice, you may have noticed, I became like them. This thing has dominated me. Three quarters of our talk is in English. Three quarters, even in the Arabic subjects in the university, we talk to our professors in English. He gets angry at us and says, girls your first language is Arabic why don't you speak Arabic and we answer back saying, We swear God Sir, English comes out easier. Even to the extent that sometimes people jock and say so English is dominating you to that extent? He says, Oh God, you are in your own country and you speak English! Look, how many years we have been studying English, but unfortunately, even I, I feel guilty towards this. Even when I, I mean, when I speak to my friends or my brothers and sisters, everything is in English smothered with four or five Arabic words.

same as we said before, the government correspondences of doing business in government or wherever you go in a shop of anywhere you are forced to write in English or are obliged to speak English

Reference 9 - 0.86% Coverage

in this country everything is translated in English, that is no problem, but when we find things written only in English, like the menus (word said in English) in restaurants are only found in English

Reference 10 - 0.35% Coverage

yes but if we receive English correspondences we only answer them back in English

Reference 11 - 0.30% Coverage

the homes and the schools and the decision-makers all are responsible

Reference 12 - 2.16% Coverage

and in the home, it is the place where the principles are planted, if the person is convinced with the importance of his own language, disregarding what is available in the world or what is available or amended regarding laws, I am not convinced in using the English language, it is a matter that goes back to the home and the school I feel these are the pillars of this issue and that they [home and school] should emphasize the importance of using the Arabic language in our everyday dealings in everything

<Internals\\Respondent2> - § 10 references coded [29.06% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.01% Coverage

I honestly think that anything too much will turn to its opposite may in some stages of my life I felt that the western culture or the English language has overshadowed on us too much I mean to an extent that I am deeply regrettable. I may be one of the people that whenever there is a lecture on cultures or exchange of cultures, whenever there are these discussions or anything that is concerned with cultures I would be the first to go and I like to participate and give my opinion. Because, unfortunately, whether I am Hessa or even people around me I am sorry to say that the Emirati people and I do not generalize here but the majority of them are proud that they know the English language proud of it proud that their children speak English and is a living truth we witness every day in our lives. I swear God I do not know how we say we want our children to learn Arabic and hold onto their Islamic religion and you people are proud I mean at home according to my personal experience my sister has a son instead of telling him come we will eat she says come we will eat (words said in English) WHY? We are all Arabs she should talk to him in Arabic. See what I mean

Reference 2 - 6.60% Coverage

Ptp: Now I mean now why I will give you an example for instance when my sister and I go to a shop, my sister could not communicate with the Pilipino girl who is selling in the shop, why because the girl is speaking English only, my sister would say do you have such and such a size (word said in English) and

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Name: Challenges faced by Emirati\Current situation of Arabic in UAE

<Internals\\Respondent1> - § 15 references coded [11.24% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.49% Coverage

I do not see it existing. The language is not in its deserved place. It is not appreciated enough for many reasons

Reference 2 - 0.08% Coverage

NO (with emphasis)

Reference 3 - 0.64% Coverage

what does it mean, for example when I am sitting with some Arab friends and they talk to you in English and none of us bearing an English nationality?

Reference 4 - 0.30% Coverage

Or they speak a sentence made up of 3 Arabic words and 3 English words

Reference 5 - 0.24% Coverage

I feel that the Arabic language is starting to disappear

Reference 6 - 0.66% Coverage

Disappear in the sense that at home I have maid who is bringing up my children – by the way I am not married yet – but I am talking of the Emirati society

Reference 7 - 1.62% Coverage

I have a maid – this maid is speaking English to my children, the mother is speaking English to the children. The children go to a school and the parents say they will get the best education – some schools teach Arabi only twice a week or once a week. There is no focus – at this least this is how it was when I was in school may be the system (word said in English) is changed now.

Reference 8 - 0.85% Coverage

so what do I mean starting to disappear, I also mean we only use it in specific circumstances and even the language I am talking with you now is not the real Arabic, it is called the colloquial Arabic.

Reference 9 - 1.38% Coverage

Reference 4 - 0.15% Coverage

I was in grade one (words said in English)

Reference 5 - 1.90% Coverage

this was my start with the English language then I started noticing everything around me is written in English books written in English even for children even in cartoons what we used to see on television was in English even sometimes the sweets and candies we buy from the shop is written on it in English so with practice and my observations around me, English became in our lives everywhere so finish we became so accustomed to it my generation is so connected to it we got so close to the English language and even got worse when we entered university

Reference 6 - 2.39% Coverage

It is true that I graduated from Zayed university which is in Abu Dhabi but because the basic language in the university was English, it was also used as a language of communication I mean wherever you went you must speak English. This was the first step for me that I must learn English well I mean my language skills got much stronger because in the university my professors were British Americans Israelis and there was no other way in communicating with them except in English. And in schools, as you know, from grade one to the final high school year our teacher was from Egypt or Jordan or Syria or Sudan what I mean is that she used to talk to us in English and we answered back in Arabic

Reference 7 - 0.32% Coverage

what I mean we did not learn much in school but we became very good once we entered university

Reference 8 - 1.91% Coverage

Ptp: Ok, first, may be I learned it because it was obligatory, before I could understand, before I could plan for myself or ask what am I doing. I did not know that I had to learn English in order to communicate with people or that I had to learn English so I can get along with my daily chores in life. So the first thing that it was obligatory that I learn English, on the basis that the English language, we must learn

Int: Who made it obligatory for you?

Ptp: as a curriculum, as a curriculum forced on us by the ministry and that we must learn English

<Internals\\Respondent3> - § 1 reference coded [0.20% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.20% Coverage

T5 Since primary schooling

<Internals\\Respondent5> - § 1 reference coded [1.01% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.01% Coverage

T7 Yes there are challenges, first think when Emiratis start learning English they do not want to speak it. And if they like it they do not want to confess they like it.

<Internals\\Respondent7> - § 2 references coded [11.40% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.41% Coverage

T4 I got my schooling in a government school, not a language school, so we used to learn English only as of grade four. They used to introduce English only at grade four, they used to start with the mother tongue, which is Arabic, and which is correct, then introduce English at grade four. Then they changed and start English earlier. But until then, they were teaching English in Arabic.

Reference 2 - 7.99% Coverage

T6 In the university. This was my first encounter. This was the first time I dealt with foreigners. I felt in the university that I have entered a society and community where I have become a minority. I remember the first time I noticed their culture, because before that, I never noticed there were any other cultures. I used to tell my English teacher in the university, I hate English, I hate English, she said to me I will give you a book, and when you finish it we will talk about that again. Once you finish it we will see and talk whether you can learn English or not learn English. So she gave me a book, it was an autobiography, the book what called "The Child called It". Ok. I didn't know then how to read good English; the teacher **was trying to challenge me. I remember I stayed and kept reading the book until 3:00am, until I finished it in a day, when I never read a book in English (said in English).**

<Internals\\Respondent8> - § 1 reference coded [1.28% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.28% Coverage

T2 I learned English at a very young age. I went to a language school, so I learned English when I was very young.

Linked Memo

Memos\\Eng Learning Experience

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